ANNALS
OF A
SUFFOLK VILLAGE

Being Historical Notes on the Parish of Horringer

BY

MANNERS W. HERVEY

The author considers that no greater service can be rendered to a locality than the assemblage of the historical facts about it, and, by acting on this theory he has endeavoured to show to what a large extent the history of England can be traced in the events which occur, century by century, in her villages

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ANNALS
OF A
SUFFOLK VILLAGE

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HORRINGER CHURCH

ANNALS
OF A
SUFFOLK VILLAGE

Being Historical Notes on the Parish of Horringer

BY

MANNERS W. HERVEY

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PREFACE

To attempt even a slight account of the course of events in this village has been a task of no little difficulty. There are remarkably few historical records of a local character to consult. So I have simply endeavoured to assemble as many facts about this place as I could come by, and to illustrate them from contemporary history.

I have tried to avoid, as far as possible, any repetition of work which has already been done by my cousin the Rev. S. H. A. Hervey. For this reason I have not, for instance, printed either the names of the rectors or the extract from Doomsday.

I wish to express my indebtedness to some friends and neighbours who have signally helped me. First to Mr V. B. Redstone of Woodbridge to whose valuable guidance and advice I owe so much; to Mr Fred Johnson of Norwich, for his careful translation of fifteenth-century wills; to the late Rev. W. A. Wickham for similar work on the twelfth century and for much valuable help; and to the Rev. S. H. A. Hervey for his important work in the Suffolk Green Books, particularly the volume on Horringer.

M. H.

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The Manor

THE story of the manor and of the manor house is here briefly told.

Theodred, an East Anglian bishop, afterwards Bishop of London, who died about 960 A.D., gave the manor of Horringer (Horninggesherthe) to "Saint Edmunds Church, to God's convent in possession". In this way the manor came to belong to the monastery. Edward the Confessor granted (in 1044) 8½ hundreds (including the manor of Horringer) to the abbey. This gave the abbot legal jurisdiction not only over his tenants in the manor, but over all men irrespective of their tenure of lands.

These rights were confirmed by the charters of successive kings[1]. The effect of these royal charters was to replace the courts of the king by those of the abbot, and to set his ministers and bailiffs in the place of those of the crown. In the Doomsday Survey of William the Conqueror we get the amount of land, the men, the animals and the ploughs which were owned first under Edward the Confessor, and second under William. We learn from this survey that there were "always 4 plough teams in demesne, and always 5 plough teams belonging to the men". The phrase 'in demesne' applied as it is to land, would imply a

[1] Gage, *Thingoe Hundred.*

definite locality, and include the manor house and court. There seems no reason why the site of the present Great Horringer Hall should not be the site of the original manor, and every reason why it should be. Each manor house possessed a walled-in garden, in which bees would be kept for honey (the honey being used for sugar), and hemp, to make ropes for waggons, etc., as well as vegetables and flowers.

The manor was almost self-supporting. There would be a pond stocked with fish. The manor house would probably be two stories high, enclosed by a wall and a moat.

It would have farm buildings around it, and perhaps six substantial houses for the bailiff and farm-servants. There might be two fish-houses built of timber and daubur. There would be a windmill and a pillory or stocks.

The village was like one large farm. The fields were unenclosed. The typical villein or labourer was free to work on his own holding three days in the week.

The strips of land held by the men were not in one plot, but scattered and intermixed in the various fields. A team consisted as a rule of eight oxen. The lord was partly dependent on his villeins for the cultivation of the demesne lands.

As to the manor court, the Great Court was evidently held at Great Horringer, and there the hall would be; and as the proceeds of the court were held by the cellarer of the abbey, it would be called the Cellarer's Court, and the cellarer without doubt held

GREAT HORRINGER HALL
(THE SITE OF THE MANOR COURT)

his courts in the house at Great Horringer. The manor courts were held in the hall which, supposing the owner to be a secular person, also often served as the common sitting and dining room for the lord, his family and domestics. Grouped round the courtyard were the granaries, sheds for cattle, the dairy, dovecotes, and other necessary edifices.

The manor contained customary tenants and free tenants. The latter might be friends of the lord, holding land by some definite but honourable service, as the presenting of a rose, a pound of pepper or a sparrow-hawk.

In Abbot Samson's time, in the twelfth century, we are told[1] that he "repaired those old halls and unroofed houses, round which hovered kites and crows. He built new chapels and likewise upper stories, in many places where there had never been any dwelling place at all but only barns". It may be that the reforming abbot did some such repairs to the manor house at Horringer.

In the fourteenth century there were very serious riots in Bury St Edmunds. I have told elsewhere how unpopular the monks were. One night in 1327 the mob came out in great numbers. They set fire to the manor house. They burnt all the corn. The poor tenants of the abbey fared ill.

As time went on and changes in the social system of the country made labour expensive, the monks found it increasingly difficult to hold so many manors in their own hands, and make the land pay. So, in

[1] Chronicles of Jocelin of Brakelond.

place of their own bailiff they put in a tenant. They had hitherto farmed the land themselves, using a bailiff, but in 1501 we find the name of John Boldero of Fornham St Martins, as farming the manor of Great Horringer. The farm was leased to him for fourteen years at a rent payable in kind. In 1524 John Pryke appears as a tenant of the manor. At the dissolution of the abbey in 1539 the whole manor changed hands. It passed at first to Sir Thomas Darcy, a favourite of the king. Subsequently it came into the hands of Sir Thomas Jermyn, of Rushbrooke Hall, in about 1586, then to Sir Jermyn Davers in 1708, and lastly to Frederick William, first Marquis of Bristol, in the year 1806, since when the manor has remained in the hands of the Hervey family.

Dwellers on the Manor

In Gage's *Thingoe Hundred* there are two extracts from the MS. known as the Consuetudines of the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds. These extracts are of great interest as they lift the veil on the feudal life of Horringer and the dwellers there in the twelfth century. The MS. incorporates, as it appears, portions of the Kalendar of Abbot Samson. This Kalendar was an important compilation. It was put together for the abbot when he took over the charge of the manors. It is mentioned by Jocelin of Brakelond[1].

"The Abbot", he tells us, "caused inquisition to be made throughout each manor, concerning the annual quit-rents from the freemen, and the names of the labourers, and their tenements, and the services due from each. He reduced all into writing.

Moreover by his command a general survey was made throughout the hundreds, of the leets and suits, of hidages and foddercorn, of hen-rents, and of other dues and rents, and issues, which for the greater part had ever been concealed by the farmers. He reduced it all to writing....This book he called his Kalendar wherein also were entered the debts he had satisfied; and this same book he almost daily perused, as if in the same he were beholding the face of his honesty in a glass."

Out of this Kalendar of Samson come the extracts quoted by Gage in his *Thingoe Hundred*. I am

[1] Jocelin of Brakelond, *Life of Abbot Samson.*

immediately concerned with that portion of it which refers to Horringer.

It is almost startling to find that from the pages of this MS. we can in some degree reconstruct the very life that went on in Horringer, so far back as the twelfth century. We see a little of the holdings of the villeins and of the demesne lands of their lord. We catch sight of the villein's houses and of the manor court, where business was transacted and minor offences dealt with. We have a glimpse of the mill where their corn was ground and the brew-house where the beer (such as it was) was brewed; and, oddest of all, there has come down to us the very names of some of these villeins, Christian names, that is, because surnames had not yet come into use. We see, for instance, in Horsecroft a little list of persons who lived by the land: "In Horsecroft there are 30 acres. Humphrey of St Edmund, Richard son of Ansis, Geoffrey of Horsecroft, Robert of Clenewall, Reginald, Peter, William his brother, Richard, and a certain widow are co-parcenors of those 30 acres. They pay £2 p.a."

The holdings of all these are small—smaller, as we shall see, than certain holdings which were held by those who did regular service to the abbot.

But in addition to these villeins there were others of higher rank who did not hold their lands by inferior services, of any kind, to their feudal lord. Is there not Robert the Knight, and William the son of Geoffrey who "holds in the same town 30 acres. He does not give hidage. He pays towards the aid of that Lord

Abbot, and he is of the high socage". William came under the abbot's authority, and had his duties at the manor court, but he owed no inferior services, and sat in the court as one of the justices. He probably paid the abbot the merely honorary payment of a pound of cummin or a sparrow-hawk. Then, in Little Horringer, there is Gilbert the squire and Leofton, who are "quit of hidage", that is, they are exempt from the tax on the land known by that name. I am greatly intrigued by these three, Robert and William and Gilbert. What sort of houses did they live in? Where were these houses? and with whom did they keep company? History gives no reply to these questions.

As to the leets[1], we learn that there were nine leets in the Thingoe hundred. The two parishes of Great and Little Horringer composed one leet. As Abbot Samson's Kalendar says: "The two Horringers are one leet. The principal manor [*dominium*] of Horringer is a half. Likewise Horringer [*i.e.* Little Horringer] and Horsecroft are a half". The last two were appendages of the principal manor. The two parishes therefore of Horringer were one leet or petty sessional court. The court itself was in Great Horringer, the principal manor, and the cellarer of the abbey presided at it and took the fees.

As the villeins at this time made up the most important class in the country life, let us look at their lot a little more closely, passing in review what is to be known about them in Horringer.

[1] A leet was a jurisdiction of the lord of the manor where he held a court.

The villeins occupied the greater part of the land of a manor.

"The average holding of a villein", says Hone[1], "was a virgate, or yard-land, about thirty acres, consisting of acre or half-acre strips. The distinctive feature of these holdings was that the strips were not collected together in one plot, but lay interspersed in the several fields. This system of agriculture was carried on until the enclosure acts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when the baulks were ploughed up and the lands redistributed, and hedged in."

At the time of which we are speaking there were two classes of dwellers on the manor, a large free element, Anglo-Norman of descent, and the customary tenants. Among the latter there were the following: the full villein, farming about 30 acres; the semi-villein farming 15 acres; the cottar with 5 acres, and the man with $\frac{1}{4}$ of an acre. Compare these with what was the custom in Horringer. I quote once more from Gage and the Kalendar of Abbot Samson:

Who holds 15 acres will work once in the week and will mow whenever required in the autumn. He will give 2 cocks, 18 eggs, and a days ploughing. There are in truth 9 such. Who holds 8 acres will work once in the week and will mow wherever required in Autumn. He will give 1 cock, 5 eggs. There are in truth 15 such.

Who holds 5 acres will work once in the week. He will give 1 cock and 5 eggs. There is in truth one such.

Who holds 2 acres will work once in the week. He will give 1 cock and 5 eggs. There are in truth two such.

[1] *The Manor*, chap. iv.

It will be noticed from the above that as the number of acres which a man cultivates diminishes, the amount of services rendered to his lord grows less. Further, what a man loses in liberty he gains in security. He is securely on the land even if he is bound to work for the same master. He pays rent partly in kind (cocks and eggs) and partly in labour, reaping when required.

The villein had indeed many disabilities. He could not make a 'clerk' of his son (*i.e.* start him off in one of the learned professions) or marry off his daughter outside the manor without the lord's permission, and, I presume, in each case, a fine (the 'merchet'). Here in Horringer he could not easily improve his condition. If he wanted to make a fold for a flock of his own sheep, he would have to pay the lord seventeen sheep as a fine. The Kalendar runs: "No one can have a fold but at the will of the Lord, and if any man have he will give 17 sheep". And he could not sell an ox or a mare without getting his lord's permission.

When times were hard he was no doubt in a bad way. "The villein", says Jessop, "had no friends for the parson himself was poor." The dark side of the villein's life is emphasised by the writer, but the Quennels[1] are probably right when they say, of the typical villein, that "He was not a miserable bondman whereas in reality he formed the backbone of the country side, free, on three days in the week, to work on his own holding"; and again: "he was tied to

[1] *A History of Everyday Things* (p. 44).

the land, and could not leave his manor, except with the lord's consent, but then in all probability it never entered his head to do so, unless he went to the wars in France, or on a pilgrimage".

From Samson's Kalendar we trace something of the buildings that stood once in Horringer. There was a mill for instance which was let out for a rent (I expect everybody used it, and paid for its use) and I think it possible that the site of it is marked by the name—Mill field—which clings to a meadow at no great distance from the manor house. Also there was a brew-house. Somebody paid for the privilege of brewing. Hops were not used, oats were, and a coarser drink was brewed called grout. I conceive that the life of the villeins was a sort of co-operative farming. I have already said something about the land the villein cultivated being jointly owned, but not contiguous, and in scattered strips. The cultivation of the demesne lands (*i.e.* work done for the lord) only took up part of the villein's time; his own lands occupied the rest.

The manor was highly organised. There was a little army of servants on it, always at work. A full description of the officers and servants of the manor is given by Hone[1]. The villein would be daily and hourly in contact with these manor servants, if, indeed, not one of them himself. The reeve, for instance, was definitely a villein-tenant, elected by the villeins, and acting on their behalf, but overlooked by the lord's bailiff. There were many such officers

[1] *The Manor*, chap. v.

of the manor, which was in the nature of a little rural state with a cabinet made up of highly specialised servants. From the duties of these officers we see how the mind of the villein might be engrossed in his work. The hayward, for instance, was to be the eye of the manor, a sort of agricultural archdeacon, overlooking everybody and everything. His duty was to rise early and keep the woods, corn and meadows, etc. He was to superintend the sowing. He was to look after the customary tenants, and see that they came and did the work they were bound to do: in haytime to overlook the mowers, and in August assemble the reapers and labourers, and watch early and late, and see that nothing be stolen or eaten by beasts, or spoilt. He was accustomed to superintend the work in the hay and harvest fields, carrying his rod or virge.

A high degree of personal devotion was expected from these officers. The ploughman must not carry fire in byres for light or warmth, nor have any light there except a lantern. The shepherd should sleep in the fold, he and his dog, and he must not leave his sheep to go to fairs, markets, wrestling matches, wakes or the tavern, without putting in a good substitute. So the waggoner "shall sleep every night with his horses, as the oxherd with his oxen".

Some of these officers were appointed on the lord's behalf, but some on the part of the villein; so the interests of both were duly considered.

As we read Samson's Kalendar we cannot help asking what sort of house did the men he mentions

by name live in. Did these villeins know anything of modern comfort?

We turn to Jessop[1] for a reply. He gives us a very dark and depressing picture of the villein's life. In East Anglia the house he lived in was a poor place, covered with turf or thatch. It had no windows, or, at best, there were oiled linen cloths, for glass was not yet. It had no chimneys. Chimneys built of brick don't seem to have come into use sooner than the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century. The smoke found its way out from a hole in the roof. There was no bedding; at night he flung himself down upon the straw. Harrison, writing late in the sixteenth century[2], mentions "the great (though not general) amendment of lodging". "Our fathers," he says, "yea we ourselves also, have lain full oft upon straw pallets, or rough mats covered only with a sheet, under coverlets made of dogswain, and a good round log under their heads instead of a bolster or pillow." "Pillows (said they) were thought meet only for women." So, at the time of which I am writing, there was little in the way of bedding, no windows (for light or air), no chimneys to carry off the smoke, no comfortable bedding. The picture is not attractive; but then we must bear in mind that life in those early days was hard and rough. It must have been bitterly cold in the hall of the manor, despite the fire at one end, and even the hall itself was only slowly

[1] "Village Life 600 years ago", in *The coming of the Friars* (Jessop).

[2] *Elizabethan England*, p. 118 (ed. Furnival).

evolving one or two separate bedrooms for the lord and his guests.

Although the abbot held jurisdiction over $8\frac{1}{2}$ hundreds, *i.e.* his and not the king's courts administered justice, that fact did not altogether free his lands of the king's officers. The two words 'ward-penny' and 'vicontiels' show this. They occur in the MS. quoted by Gage (pp. xvi, xvii). The first was, it seems, a tax levied upon certain people with a military intent. The second were rents farmed by a sheriff or king's officer.

The sheriff's fees were not, it appears, collected from those of inferior social standing. People 'of high socage', knights, and such-like, seem to have contributed them; so the king's authority made itself felt through a military tax. In conclusion we learn from the Kalendar that the abbey held "in hand," and farmed directly, 344 acres; and also that there were no less than four farms or rents held on the manor by, probably, something approaching free tenure, and paying £4. 5*s*. 6*d*. p.a.

The Knight

He appears in Samson's Kalendar as 'Robert the Knight'. In Jocelin's Chronicle he is designated 'Robert of Horning'. He seems to have lived in Great Horringer. He is frequently mentioned in close association with William son of Geoffrey, and Reyner and companions. His name appears in the Kalendar as one who owed 'suit' (attendance at the manor court) to his feudal lord. We know that Geoffrey was 'of the high socage', and he was no doubt a 'free tenant'. Robert was perhaps on the same social plane. He is probably one of "the two Roberts who pay $\frac{1}{2}d.$ between them to the 'Ward pennies'" (money contributed to watch and ward), which pennies were only collected from certain residents. He also pays 'in aid of vicontiels', *i.e.* rents farmed by a sheriff ("from the land of Robert the knight, 8*d.*"), and here again, as the Kalendar shows, his name is associated with "William the son of Geoffrey, and Reyner et socii". By these payments he held, I imagine, some direct connection with the king's service, whose officer the sheriff was. We know little beyond his name, Robert the Knight, or Robert of Horning, but we know a good deal about his associates and about his feudal chief.

First about his associates. A knight would surely be most closely allied to his peers. We know actually who all the knights of the liberty of St Edmund were.

Their names and their place of residence are given in the list which was drawn up at the marshalling of knights in the year 1200, and this list appears in Jocelin's Chronicle. There are thirty-seven of them. Some of these were quite near neighbours to Robert, as Richard of Ickworth, Robert of Halsted (Hawsted), Walter of Saxham, or Norman of Risby.

Robert of Horning was no doubt one of those who witnessed and assisted at the great occasion when Abbot Samson was installed. He would have been present in the choir "where the Abbot was kissed by the prior and the whole convent in order". In the chapterhouse he would have heard him beseeching them to pray for him, and then address himself to the clerks and knights, requiring them that they should assist him with their advice; and he would have replied, as did the others, by the mouth of Winer the sheriff: "We are ready to stand by you in counsel and assistance on every occasion as we did by our dear lord whom God hath called to his glory". Then, at the end of the great day, he would have been one of more than a thousand dinner guests with whom the new abbot "spent the day of his festival with great rejoicing".

It cannot be said that all Robert's associates were always models of courtesy or even of humanity. Samson tells the story of two of the knights of the liberty who lived at Risby[1]:

He addressed two knights of Risby, William and Norman, at the time when they were adjudged to be in his mercy,

[1] Chronicles of Jocelin de Brakelond.

publicly in this wise: "When I was a cloister monk, sent to Durham on business of our church, and thence returning through Risby, being benighted, I sought a night's lodging from Norman, and I received a blank refusal; but going to the house of William, and seeking shelter, I was honourably entertained by him. Now, therefore, those twenty shillings, which are 'the mercy' I will without mercy exact from Norman; but contrariwise, to William I give thanks, and the amerciament of twenty shillings that is due from him I do with pleasure remit".

Norman's refusal seems sufficiently unintelligible, for though Bury St Edmunds is only four miles from Risby, yet the darkness of the night and (no doubt) the appalling condition of the roads would make further progress impossible.

Truly one can scarcely say with Chaucer, of Norman, "He was a very parfit gentil knight".

After the receipt of the homages on the day of his installation, Abbot Samson "sued for an aid from the knights who promised each 20 shillings", but they seem to have quickly repented of their liberal offer, for they held back payment from twelve knights, saying "that those twelve knights ought to assist the other forty in keeping their castle-guards [a costly affair, it seems] and for their escuages [a tax when the knight was absent from his duties] as well as in respect of the Abbot's aid".

This matter raised no little controversy between Samson and his knights. The tenacity of the abbot comes out in this contention. He knew he was right. Custom in the past was alleged but Samson dis-

allowed it. The resolute abbot "entered into a contest with his knights, himself against all, and all of them against him"; and the churchman won.

How firm Samson had to be with his knights, and how ready they were to break away from the restraints of feudal custom, is clearly seen in the incident when the knights made arrangements for holding a tournament. A special license seems to have been granted to hold such a tournament when Richard I returned to England after his long absence abroad. Many knights (so Jocelin tells us) met for this purpose between Thetford and Bury St Edmunds. The site lay within the limits of the abbot's authority. He opposed the holding of the tournament; but the knights ignored him, and, without permission, they held it. The rest of the story must be told in the words of Jocelin:

On another occasion there came twenty-four young men with their followers, sons of noblemen, to have their revenge at the aforesaid place; which being done they returned into the town to put up there. The abbot hearing of this, ordered the gates to be locked, and all of them to be kept within.

The next day was the vigil of Peter and Paul the apostles. Therefore, having passed their word and promising that they would not go forth without permission, they all dined with the abbot on that day. After dinner, when the abbot retired to his chamber, they all arose and began to carol and sing, sending into the town for wine, drinking and then shouting, depriving the abbot and convent of their sleep, and doing everything in scorn of the abbot. They spent the day until the evening in this manner; and refused to desist, even when

the abbot commanded them. But when evening was come, they broke open the gates of the town, and went forth by force. The abbot, indeed, solemnly excommunicated all of them, yet not without first consulting Archbishop Hubert, at that time justiciary; and many of them came, promising amendment and seeking absolution.

That the abbot could on occasion be as tactful and accommodating as on others he was adamant is seen when King Richard sent messages from his camp in France "that for every nine knights of their baronies all the bishops and abbots of England were to make a tenth knight, and that without delay those knights should go to him in Normandy, with horses and arms, in aid against the king of France".

As the number of knights in the liberty of St Edmund was thirty-seven, this meant that Abbot Samson would have to make four new knights and dispatch them to France. It seems odd to us that one who held an office so profoundly 'religious' as the head of a great monastery should have so secular a duty to perform; but the distinction between secular and religious was very different in those days to what it is in these.

Samson however was confronted with a dilemma. His knights denied that they were liable for foreign service. Either the abbot, then, must lay himself open to contumacy to his king, or his knights must forfeit their liberty and go abroad. Samson decided to go to France himself and see the king personally; and though the king said that he did not want either silver or gold but that he instantly required four

knights, Samson got over the difficulty, first by getting four mercenaries and then by the payment of £100 down as quittance of the cost of their maintenance.

There were still the knights to deal with, and the abbot showed once more his tact and goodness of heart by accepting less than he paid—2 marks upon every shield. It seems strange to us however to find knights arguing with their sovereign (even indirectly) as to the rights and wrongs of foreign service, and bargaining with their own feudal lord as to how much they are to pay to be freed from service in France.

Robert and his associates, it seems, were keenly alert whenever new demands, even by royalty, clashed with time-honoured custom. On other occasions their behaviour suggests that of raw and undisciplined schoolboys rather than that of grave and responsible men. Samson seems to have had an intractable and fiery crew to manage, though they were not at times unamenable to tactful and judicious handling.

The Fourteenth Century

THE fourteenth century was an age of great disorder and misery for our country. It was also a period of important social transition. The old feudal system of land tenure was breaking down, and events were fast leading on to the social and religious changes which came with the Reformation. What documentary evidence have we of the connection of these events with Horringer? Let me briefly enumerate them. There is first the subsidy of 1327. This has been edited by the Rev. S. H. A. Hervey, and both Great and Little Horringer are included in it. In this subsidy we have two lists of names including all those in this parish who paid their twentieth.

Then in 1341 we have the 'Nonae'. This is a statement made by six good men in either parish (and again we have their names) as to what the parson's income was whom it was proposed to tax. Next, we have the Black Death of 1348–9. There are no records of what this terrible scourge effected in the township, but as the disease was so deadly and widespread in East Anglia we shall rightly assume that Horringer did not escape its ravages.

Lastly, there is the poll-tax of 1381. Here again we have, in each township, the list of names of those who were taxed, and their occupations.

Taken by themselves these facts and lists seem dry

and uninspiring. It is not so, however, when we connect them with the events of history and of our neighbourhood. The adjacent borough of Bury St Edmunds and the county of Suffolk shed much light on local events; and the larger events of our country's history, the Scottish and French wars and the social changes of our island generally, find their reflection in the incidents and happenings of our township.

I will begin by a comparison of the subsidy and the poll-tax of 1327 and 1381; briefly allude to the effect of the Black Death; and then attempt by the aid of the 'Nonae' of 1341 some description of the relation of the parson and his people in this century.

The subsidy of 1327 coincides with very serious rioting in Bury St Edmunds, in which the establishment of Regulars, *i.e.* the monks of the convent, were deeply involved. I do not think that the riots were at all caused by the subsidy, though the rising of 1381 was certainly caused (as its immediate occasion) by the poll-tax. The two manors here were held by the convent. The lord of the manor was the Abbot of Bury St Edmunds. Consequently when a serious collision occurred between the convent and the townsmen, united, in this case, with many country-folk who dwelt on the manors of the abbey, our township was bound to be involved. It was: how seriously, and with what effects, events will show. But first I should like to draw a contrast between the riots of 1327 and the rising of 1381. The first, it seems to me, was a fierce onslaught on the abbey *as* an abbey, and on its

occupants. It was local. It was a bitter contest between the townsmen, together with the dwellers on certain abbey manors, and their grasping landlords. It was not a national rising like that of 1381. The country at large was not involved. It was a fierce and savage attack on the monastery.

It may be that the oppression from which both townsmen and tenants of the abbey manors suffered was intensified by the incidence, that year, of the tax. In the autumn of 1327 a parliament was held at Lincoln. This parliament granted the king a twentieth on all movables. A writ for collection was issued on November 23rd. Two commissioners were appointed for Suffolk. Our lists contain the names of all who paid this twentieth in Great and Little Horringer. We were at war with Scotland in the summer of 1327: the king needed money: hence this subsidy. The story of the riot is fully told in J. H. Thompson's *Records of St Edmund*. It does not appear that Horringer men joined in it, though they would have had as good reason as the members of other abbey manors. The unanimity of the townsmen is shown by the fact that the mob was led by the mayor himself and other principal burgesses. At this time the town was greatly increasing in wealth; but the monks, departing from the policy of concession of the statesmanlike Abbot Samson, had sturdily set themselves against Samson's conciliatory measures. They saw the town growing richer, but the abbey rent meanwhile remained at the same figure, £40. New shops and stalls, which were being

built in the market place, without the permission of the convent, further moved their cupidity. They tried to preserve the same rights and dues which they had enjoyed in an earlier day, when the town had not developed its corporate consciousness.

The result was the crisis of 1327. Into this riot the workmen of the abbey manors flung themselves from many quarters, and the townsmen, on their side, joined in the orgy of destruction, largely because they were deeply in debt.

The religious houses had by this time, it must be remembered, become great proprietors. They were very wealthy. The townsmen were determined to free themselves, if they could, once and for all, from the galling yoke of the monastery. But this was not merely a townsman's riot. By every road that led to the abbey there poured an immense stream of country-folk. As often as not these were led by their own parish priests, or by *capellani*—chantry priests from the surrounding churches. It is clear that the rule of the monks, as landlords, was heartily hated. These were out to retain the old customs of servitude like any secular landlord. The parsons from Barrow, from Bradfield, from Hartest and from Little Whelnetham, these all led their own flocks. The men on the land, particularly those who came from the abbey manors, had their own motive for destruction. They feared the revived claims of serfage, from which, in this century, they were gradually becoming free. So their wrath fell on the abbey itself. From this they carried off all valuable goods. They destroyed and

burnt everything which they could not take away. For four days in November destruction and fire wrought havoc in the abbey. Then the fury of the rioters was directed to the granges.

It was on Tuesday, October 20th, 1327, that the storm fell upon Horringer. On that day the manor houses went up in smoke and flames. All the corn was destroyed together with the houses. So far as I know the villeins in Horringer took no part in this riot. Perhaps they were overawed by their proximity to the abbey. Perhaps the prospective loss of their own granges tempered their passions. Anyhow the mob did for them what it appears they were not willing to do by their own hand—destroyed the manor houses which Samson had so carefully cherished and possibly rebuilt.

I spoke of the miseries which befel our land in this, the fourteenth, century. The worst of all was now to come, viz. the Black Death. To the miseries of war—war with the French and war with the Scots—was added the misery of disease. As however there are no records of this terrible scourge for Horringer, I must be brief. I allude to it because its ravages had the effect of hastening certain social changes which were already going on in our country, viz. the gradual emancipation of labour. The Black Death was one of those scourges which in the Middle Ages swept from time to time over the land. It seems to me to have been far more terrible than the plague in the seventeenth century. It did not confine itself to the towns. It devastated the counties. In July alone, of

the years 1349 to 1350, there were 209 institutions to the priesthood in the single diocese of Norwich[1], with such rapidity did the livings change hands. Two-thirds of the benefices were vacant in the year ending March 1350: 800 beneficed clergy perished in 1349. When regular clergy are added to the secular the number of deaths was 2000. If this awful mortality befel the clergy, what were the figures for the rest of the population? We only know that the manor court rolls, in which the name of every tiller of the soil was entered, are very scarce in the year 1350. Ordinarily the name of a villein would be entered on the rolls of the manor court, and struck out when he died. On his death the lands he had occupied would, if he had no heir, escheat to the lord. The depopulation of the countryside must have been terrible. In some ways this mortality was to the interest of the lord of the manor. It brought the land once more into his absolute possession. But on the other hand the shortage of labour wherewith to till the land must have been pitiable. And this shortage led to what was very soon attempted by Parliament to check the inevitable rise of wages—it led to the Statute of Labourers. About this I shall have something more to say later on.

The Black Death also affected the clergy very adversely, for if there were no land workers there was no one from whom to collect tithe.

Consequently it is from this date that we begin to hear so much of the chantry priests. It paid the

[1] Jessop, *The coming of the Friars.*

parson to forsake his country living for a better-paid chantry in the town. Chaucer's "Poor Parson of the Town", who

> Sette not his benefice to hire
> And left his sheep encombered in the myre
> And ran to London unto seynte Paules
> To seeken him a chaunterie for soules

was simply acting against his own financial interest. The Black Death must have brought poverty and want to many a poor parson of the countryside. The parsons at the two Horringers must have suffered badly from its effects.

I now come to the poll-tax of 1381. This was levied in order to raise funds for the payment of the king's forces in France. It was to defray the heavy expenses of the French wars that Parliament, in 1380, decided that a charge of three groats (12 pence) should be made on every lay person of 15 years and upwards. I do not think that the anger with which this tax was met is to be explained merely as resistance to a burdensome charge. To understand this rising which took place, not locally, but throughout the whole land, we have to remember both the Black Death and recent legislation, particularly the Statute of Labourers. The rising was a common and unanimous resistance to the revival of the claims of feudal service which had fallen into abeyance. The destruction, by the rioters, of records of the manorial courts shows that their aim was to destroy the weapon which the manorial lords were ruthlessly using, at this

time, to regain and reinforce such service as had been withdrawn and to break the chain which bound the native to the soil. As is so clearly seen in the chapter, on the Peasant Revolt, in J. R. Green's *History*, there was a slow revolution going on, all the time, in agrarian affairs. The rise in one case of the farming class, free, but paying a rent for their lands, and, in the other, the growth of free labour, at liberty to work for whom they wished, and where they chose, for a money payment, this economic revolution had been going steadily forward for some years past.

Under the old system the typical worker on the land, the villein, rendered certain services to his lord as rent for the lands which he tilled. It had come about in the passage of time that many of these services had been commuted for money payments. By the breaking of the personal tie which bound a man to his lord the old system was weakened. The essence of the feudal system was that it bound a man to one spot and one master; but by the commutation of labour services for a money payment it gradually came about that these services ceased to be rendered. Now the Statute of Labourers attempted to put a stop to these changes. It aimed at pinning a man to the same lord, to the same services (defined in the Court Rolls), and even to the same wage which he had received two years before the Plague. This was the chief cause of the rising. As the labourers in Kent cried out to the king: "We will that you free, for ever, us and our lands, and that we be never named or held for serfs". Such was the

immediate cause of the rising. The list of names of Horringer men and women in the subsidy of 1327 and the poll-tax of 1381 are given in the first case in the Suffolk Green Book of that name, and in the second by Mr Edgar Powell. The interval between these two is filled up by the six names (for each parish) of the 'juratores' for the 'Nonae' of 1341. I confess to no little interest in these lists. They mark the time when the surname, which had told of a man's place of origin, or his occupation or his appearance, becomes merely a name inherited from his father. The lists tell us, too, something of the occupations of the countryside. In some cases the 'de' (giving place of origin) or the 'le' (giving occupation) are still preserved. In the 'Nonae' there is a 'Robert the Piper'. In the poll-tax of 1381 this has become a surname, Johannes Pypere; but in 1341 we know for sure that Robert was the piper. Again, in the 1381 list, no less than three names have come from the suggestion of the man's resemblance to the bird of the green and the pond—the goose. There is a Goss, and a Gandawe, and a Goos, all of them surnames. Again, in the earlier (1327) subsidy, the list seems to tell us where the man comes from and what was his occupation: 'Clement de Horkesle', 'Willmus de Chevington', or even merely 'Jacobus atte Bussh'. Or again it gives his trade: 'Richardus le Soutere', 'Johanna le Talliour', 'Willmus le Cartere'. These, it seems, were that special person's occupation; but by 1381 they are his surnames carried on from father to son. His name is simply Coupere or Clerk or

Assheman, not the Coupere (maker of barrels) or the clerk (man of learning), or the Assheman (cutter of ash-wands or bows for bow-men). Similarly in the matter of place of origin, in 1327 we have Philippus de Clenewall, Robertus de Holmere, but later on these are surnames. The man who came from Whepstede is Galfridus Whepstede (1341), the man from Bury St Edmunds just Thomas Clenewall.

The payments made on account of these taxes in 1381 were small. There is no 'gentleman'. The highest payer is a 'draper' who contributes 3*s*.

In 1327 the highest payer in Great Horringer is Johanne de Stretham who pays 6*s*. 8*d*. The others pay 3*s*. down to 7*d*. Again there appears to be no 'gentleman'.

The Parson and His People

About seven years before the Black Death, Parliament granted to Edward III, in his fourteenth year (1341), a subsidy of the ninth of corn, wool and lambs, from every beneficed clergyman, "in consideration of the great Travailes that he had made and sustained in his wars" (Commissioners' preface).

An inquiry was made by six good men in every parish as to the ability of the parson to pay and the sources of his income. The replies to this inquiry are extant, at the Moyses Hall Library, in the volume entitled 'Nonarum Inquisitiones', and both Great and Little Horringer are represented. In each case the facts of the parson's income are presented, as required, by six persons whose names are given. From this document we can learn something about the relations of the priest of that day with the people to whom he ministered. The replies of the six jurators seem to follow a pretty regular formula, but they vary very much. Some, like our own, give no more than a plain answer to plain questions. Others volunteer all sorts of information, which, though not officially necessary, is of great interest to the antiquarian. The replies, here in Great Horringer, are as follows:

Hornynggeserth magna worth £16.

They say also that the Church of Hornynggeserth Mag amounts to £16, and they say that it does not exceed the

valuation this year, and they say that the nona presented of corn wool and lambs is worth this year £8. 3*s.* 0*d.*, and not more than that. That the Rector of the said Church holds divers tenements pertaining to the said Church in land meadow and pasture, rented, together with tithes of hay, and divers other small tithes, also principal oblations, which are worth per annum £7. 17*s.* 0*d.*, as is presented by six men of that town on their oath namely William Bercarius, Robert of Brockley, Robert the Piper, Henry of Whelnetham, Philip Dawe, and John Steel.

The replies for Little Horringer are:

Hornynggesherth P'va. worth viii marks.

Also they say that the Church of Horningsherth P'va. amounts to 106 shillings and 3*d.*, and that it does not exceed the valuation this year. They say also that the nona presented of corn wool and lambs is worth in this year 46*s.* and 8*d.* and no more; that the Rector of the Church there holds divers tenements pertaining to the said church in land meadows and pastures rented, together with tithes of hay, and divers other small tithes; also principal oblations which are worth per annum 60*s.* as is presented by six men of that town, jurators, to wit Thomas Bercarius, Adam son of Peter, William of Rongeton, Richard le Sonte, William Goldyng, and Richard Glovere.

This MS. has been ably edited[1] by the Rev. W. A. Wickham, late rector of Ampton. In quoting from it I will confine myself to the facts given for Great Horringer, in so far as they throw light on the social relations of the parson with his people. In this reply a good deal is to be learnt from the sources of the parson's income and the manner of its collection.

[1] *Suffolk Inst. Archaeol.* vol. xvii.

The parson's income, then, is here divided into two. First, the *great tithes* of corn, wool and lambs; and, secondly, all the rest of his income, as coming from (*a*) *the lesser tithes* (*i.e.* all others), and (*b*) *money-offerings*. The latter would consist of two kinds of offerings: (i) the *principal oblations* which would be offered on three (or more usually four) Great Days, and (ii) the *ferial oblations*, *i.e.* those made on ordinary Sundays, at churchings, burials, or funeral masses when they were specially bespoken. In addition to these there was the *rent* derived from the parson's land (for the clergy were considerable landowners), *i.e.* of arable, meadow, pasture, and wood; and also there were *offerings in kind*.

As is well known wax was offered at Candlemas, eggs at Easter, and hens at Christmas. About 100 hens were offered, probably at Christmas, in Great Livermere alone[1].

Such were the sources of the parson's income. But to get a lively impression of the intimacy of the relations of priest and people one cannot do better than go into the subject of tithe in some detail.

It is, I think, from this that one sees how closely bound up were the interests and preoccupations of the parson with those of his people.

The medieval parson lived on terms of much greater intimacy with his neighbours, and much nearer the land from which he was supported, than does the modern clergyman who receives his tithe in the form of a periodic cheque. In old days the tithe

[1] Gasquet, *Medieval Parish Life*, p. 12.

was paid in kind. The medieval parson's income reached him in things much more than in money, and these things came from the land. It is this fact which makes one understand how necessary it was that the tithe barn should be the extensive building it was. I ascertain from Norwich that in 1814 a faculty was obtained to dilapidate a large portion of the tithe barn at Horringer. The measurements then were no less than 126 feet long, 21 feet broad and 13 feet 6 inches high. The barn was then reduced to 51 feet long and 21 feet broad. But previous to 1814 we see what a huge building it was. When, however, we consider what the tithe was at an earlier date, we are no longer surprised. Even then a large portion of it could never find its way into the barn at all. Consider what tithe was. It was (according to Gasquet[1]) "either *predial* or *personal*. If predial it was payable on the annual crops of corn, wine, oil, and fruits, etc., and on the natural increase of cattle, including milk and cheese. The predial tithes were distinguished again into the *Greater* tithe—that is on corn, wine and wool; and the *Lesser* tithe on vegetables, fruits, etc." Personal tithe was paid on profits of trade and business. Whichever it was, tithe was generally acknowledged as sanctioned or ordered by divine law or custom.

Let us go a little into detail.

"The council of Merton", says Gasquet[2], "set forth a schedule of things upon which tithes had to be paid by law. This included the cutting and felling of trees and woods, the

[1] *Medieval Parish Life*, chap. i.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 12.

pasturage of the forests, the sale of the timber; the profits of vineyards, fisheries, rivers, dovecots, and fish-stews; the fruits of trees, the off-spring of animals, the grass harvest, and that of all things sown; of fruit of warrens, of wild animals, of hawking, of gardens and manses, of wool, flax and wine; of grain and of turf where it was dug and dried; of pea-fowl, swans and capons, of geese and ducks; of lambs, calves, and colts, of hedge cuttings, of eggs, of rabbits, of bees with their honey and wax; together with the profits from mills, hunting, handicrafts of all sorts, and every manner of business."

In the list which Wickham[1] gives of titheable articles he names three things of special interest, viz. reeds and bulrushes for thatching and closing in walls and folds; teazles (grown at Melford and Glemsford) used by local cloth-workers; and lokes or lokys, broken wool collected at sheep shearing.

It is an amazing list. Practically everything, it seems, was titheable.

To collect his income then the parson had to be pretty ubiquitous. The tithe brought him wherever men (or women) were engaged in the business of the land. He must have been familiar with the variations of the seasons. He must have known intimately the set-backs or prosperity of his people, and about all the varied details of their concerns. Their prosperity was *his* prosperity, and in times of dearth he must have known, equally with them, the pinch of want.

From the 'Nonae' we ascertain that a considerable portion of the parson's income came from what were

[1] *Suffolk Inst. Archaeol.* vol. XVII.

known as the *principal oblations*. These, of course, were money payments. They were offered on certain regular dates, generally at high festivals. At Trimley St Mary these dates were Christmas, Purification of the B.V.M., Easter, and the Assumption of the B.V.M. It by no means follows that there were always four dates, or that these four were universal. The offerings, however, were made regularly, and they were made in money and not in kind.

We are told nothing, in the returns made from Horringer, about the parson's income, of a rectory house, or of a garden, or of a dovecote. The old rectory at Horringer does not go further back in date than the sixteenth century, *i.e.* its size is adapted to a married clergy. But in earlier days the parsonage houses must have been much smaller, a messuage with garden, curtilage or court, and one or more pigeon-house or dovecote. In some parishes in Suffolk these are included in the income returned, but not in this parish.

"In the middle of the 14th century", says Mr Wickham[1], "the parsonage, generally speaking, would probably consist of a hall, a parlour, a kitchen, and 2 or perhaps 3 bedrooms. We have to remember, however, that the parson at this time was bound in conscience to devote a certain definite proportion of his income not only to the poor but also to hospitality; *i.e.* to the duty of giving lodging to any chance traveller or stranger, for there were no hotels. Hence the extra rooms we read of in Cutts[2]."

[1] *Suffolk Inst. Archaeol.* vol. XVII, pt 2, p. 112.
[2] *The Parish Priest and his People*, p. 148.

In the chapter on parsonage houses we learn many interesting details about the parson's house at this time. In arrangement it greatly resembled the smaller manor houses of that date. The chief rooms would be annexed to the hall. Other necessary buildings would be under a separate roof. Thus at Kelvedon in Essex in 1356 the parsonage was one hall "with a solar [loft] and chamber [*i.e.* bedroom], at one end of the hall, and with a buttery and cellar at the other". Then there was a second house consisting of "a kitchen with a convenient chamber in the end of the said house for guests, and a bakehouse. Also one other house in two parts next the gate at the entrance of the manor for a stable and cow-house". That is three distinct buildings; and it should be carefully noted that the second fulfils the duty of hospitality as the parson keeps a chamber for strangers and travellers.

Although it does not occur till the seventeenth century I think that the description given by Robert Herrick in the little poem, entitled *A Thanksgiving to God for his house*, not inaptly describes the parson's abode at this time.

Low in my porch as in my fate
  Both void of state
And yet the threshold of my door
  Is worn by th' poor
Who hither come and freely get
  Good words or meat.

Like as my parlour so my Hall
And Kitchen's small
A little Butterie, and therein
A little Byn
Which keeps my little loaf of bread
Unchipt, unflead.

Some little sticks of Thorne or Briar
Make me a fire
Close by whose living coale I sit
And glow like it.
Lord, tis thy plenty-dropping hand
That soiles my land
And giv'st me, for my bushel sown
Twice ten for one.

Thou mak'st my teeming hen to lay
Her egg each day
Besides my healthful Ewes to beare
Me twins each yeare
The while the conduits of my kine
Run creame, (for wine).

So much has been said hitherto about the parson's income that we are in danger of overlooking what, in addition to the traveller and the poor, he was bound to provide for. He had to find wax for the candles on the altars at the shrines; he had to keep the choir-books, etc., in good repair, and to provide bell-strings for the bells of his church. The bees of the parsonage garden and the hemp he grew there would perhaps help to meet two of these needs. He would also have to provide oil and frankincense and

wine. The offerings of his flock might help him with some of these things.

The claims of the poor and of hospitality were admitted, but taken as a whole one gets the impression that there was much give and take in the relations of parson and people in this century, and that the medieval parson was at least as intimate with his flock (do not the disturbances of the fourteenth century bear this out?) as his present-day successor is.

We must not, of course, conceive of the relations of the parson with his people as being merely business ones. After all the common meeting place for both of them was the church, and, as I have said elsewhere, both parson and people were at one in making that church a little gem of beauty. There, both would meet, he to officiate, and they to make their offerings of prayer and thanksgiving in the medieval offices of the Church.

As Piers Plowman says:

> And upon Sunday to cease, God's services to hear
> Both Matins and Masse, And, after meat in Churches
> To hear their Evensong everyman ought.

How closely the very provision of lights must have drawn together the people to their parson. See how often the provision of lights in the church, either before the images of the saints, or at the high altar, is made a subject of bequest in the ordinary wills of the date. The light might be a taper to burn before the image of the saint or be placed on the rood-loft, or it might be a candle placed on the left-hand side of

the altar, for the mass, or the bequest might be for the lamp, kept burning perpetually, night and day, before the crucifix on the high altar. All these things appear constantly in contemporary wills. Some pious parishioner supplied the oil, certain definite members of the flock offered the tapers to burn before the images. So in Myrc's *Instruction to Parish Priests*, it is said to the priest:

> See that thy candle of wax it be
> And set it so that thou it see
> On the left hand of thine altere
> And look alway that it burn clere.

The popularity[1] of these lights is shown in many ways—gilds maintained them, the public generally subscribed to them, and testators frequently left money to them. "The lighting of candles", says Lyndwood[2], "is not to dispel darkness, but to show that the saints are lightened by the light of heaven from God."

And then, of course, there were the large wax candles, two of them or more, placed about the wooden hearse which was set up in a church at a funeral. The relations, with the deep apprehension of those days (and it was deep) of the after-world would be particularly interested in these, and what they symbolised, *i.e.* that though their bodies were buried in the darkness their souls were in the land of light.

[1] Cutts, *The Parish Priest and his People*, p. 312.
[2] *Pontificals.*

The intimacy of the relations of parson and people would be intensified by the bidding prayer which, as we learn from the York manual[1], was offered up in the parish churches, and must have gone a long way to draw together the hearts of both. In this bidding prayer was a petition "for the parsons of this Church, that hath the care of men's souls, that God give them grace well to teach their subjects, and the subjects well to work after helpful teaching, that both the teachers and subjects come to everlasting bliss". Prayer is offered for the pope and his cardinals, for the archbishop, "for all priests and clerks who sing in the Church"; for the king and queen, the peers and lords, all the good commoners of the land; and then: "For all that worship in this Church, or any other, with bell, vestment, chalice, altar cloth, or towell or any other ornament"; and "for all that give or leave in testament any good to the right maintenance and upholding of the work of this church, and for all them that find any Light in this church, as in torch, taper, land, in worshipping of God or of our Lady or of any of His Saints". And for all that are in debt or deadly sin. And then: "We shall pray for all those that pay their tendes (tithes) and their offerings to God and to the holy Church, that God do them meed in the bliss of heaven that ever shall last, and they that do not that God of his mercy bring them soon amendment". They are to pray for all pilgrims and palmers; and then: "We shall also pray for all land tylland [under cultivation] that God

[1] By the Rev. J. Raine (Surtees Society). (Cutts, *op. cit.* p. 208.)

for his goodness and for his grace, and through our good prayers, maintain them that they may be saved from all evil winds and wethers, and from all dreadful storms, that God send us corn and cattle for to live upon, to God's pleasure and the welfare of our souls". They are to make a special prayer for their fathers' souls and their mothers' souls, and "specially for all the souls whose bones are buried in this Church or in the Church-yard or in any holy place; and in especial for all the souls that bide the great mercy of Almighty God in the bitter pains of Purgatory, that God for his great mercy release them of their pain if it be his blessed will".

Then follows the Bede Roll, the reading out of the names of those who had recently died in the parish, and the commendation of them to the prayers of the congregation.

This bidding prayer emanates it is true from a northern source but it illustrates the mind of the age, and it brings home to us how intimately the interests of the parishioners, past and present, were bound up with the services of the Church. It shows us how closely what was said and done there expressed the common desires of parson and people, and in the absence of local material, it helps to illustrate the intimate relations which subsisted, in the pre-Reformation Church, between the priest of the parish and his people.

The Babwell Friars

In the wills of the fifteenth century we find frequent bequests from Horringer people to the friars of Babwell. For instance, William Welham in 1461 leaves 10*s*. to the Friars Minors of Badwell (*sic*). William Godfrey in 1470 leaves them 10*s*. Thomas Newhalle directs that 20*s*. be paid to the Babwell friars "to celebrate for me"; and John Brysett makes them a bequest of 10*s*. "for a trentall"; while Walter Noble (1470) requests that 5*s*. be paid "to the Friars of Babwell to celebrate for my soul a trental of S' Gregory".

Finally, there is the rather interesting bequest (which I have explained elsewhere), in 1474, of Adam Rodyng: "I will that the mespens of both the gilds of the Trinity and S: John Baptist in Hornyngesherth been so partyd equally halfe sorte for to be sunge for in the parish churche of Hornyngesherthe by the parson and the residue to the fryers of Babwell".

We notice from this will that the testator divides his bequest between the parson of his own parish and the friars. Clearly the friars here seem to be intruding on the parson's privileged area. We notice, too, both from this and the other wills what a profound influence the doctrine of purgatory had on the minds of men at this period.

Meanwhile, who were these friars? and where

was Babwell? and how came the friars to be saying masses when the people's own parson was at hand to do so? These questions take our minds back to one of the most confusing facts of the Middle Ages, viz. to the rivalries, due to conflicting authority, which subsisted between monk, friar, and parish priest. The friars in this neighbourhood are an illustration. They first appeared in Bury St Edmunds in 1257. They were allowed to settle first in the northern part of the town, from which they were expelled by the monks of the abbey; and then in 1258 they obtained quarters in the west of Bury St Edmunds where they remained for five or six years. Then they were ordered to quit by Pope Urban IV. It is said that monks and friars were reconciled in 1262. The reconciliation was, it seems, somewhat superficial as the friars espoused the popular cause, against the monks, in the riots of 1327. In any case the influence of the convent of Bury St Edmunds at Rome was predominant, and the friars left Bury St Edmunds for good in 1263. They appear to have moved to Babwell, a site which was freely granted them by the monastery pretty soon after this.

Babwell lay between what was known as 'Thinghow' and the waters of the pond formed by the locks which seem to have dammed up the stream of the river Lark. Thinghow is practically to be identified with Shirehouse Heath, *i.e.* the open space extending to Westley and Fornham All Saints, where there was an important court of law. There, anyhow, the friars established their house; and it was from there that

they came to extend their influence and (from the parson's point of view) their interference, so widely.

This house was erected where the building called 'the Priory' now stands, and adjacent to the Toll-house Inn. Such were the facts of the arrival of the friars in Bury St Edmunds and at Babwell.

It is necessary, however, to go a little further back to understand how they came to be saying masses and hearing confessions (as was the case) in the parishes of this neighbourhood. We have to bear in mind that the *raison d'être* of the friars was to initiate a religious movement in which it was essential that its members should own no property. As an Order they were mendicants. Unlike the monks, who had often become great proprietors, and whose buildings were often of the finest, and whose fare was not unfrequently rich and sumptuous, the boast of the friars was that they owned nothing. Consequently, the friaries and churches of the Order might be, as they were, vested in the pope. Gifts and legacies might be accepted, but not in their own name. The first friary in London was vested in the corporation. The friars, moreover, were wont to boast of the papal sanction which conferred the right to act in the confessional, with or without the leave of the parish priest; and, further, the friars were exempted from episcopal control. Archbishop Peckham was himself a friar. No wonder then that the friars were exempted by special privilege from the control of the bishop.

But what was good for the movement in its early days of high ideals and deep earnestness was far from a benefit when laxity prevailed and the Order needed discipline. Between centralisation at Rome, then, and exemption from episcopal control, it is not to be wondered at if, as appears to have been the case, the friars degenerated from their early and very high ideals. Their movement generally seems to have retained a large measure of its popularity in England. The frequent bequests to which I have referred cannot be explained otherwise. But one cannot believe that Chaucer's satirical picture of a member of the Order is without some grounds of truth. It seems that there were certain limits within which the friars were allowed to beg. Each friary had its recognised district within which it had a customary right to beg for alms, and through this its members, 'limitours', as they were called, made their rounds regularly within the appointed 'limits'.

It must not of course be forgotten that originally the friar owed no small part of his popularity to the freedom and originality of his speech. The parish priest, not gifted with exceptional powers in this direction, would soon find a rival in the man who made his addresses, very likely on the village green, both fervent and gay. "As revivalists and popular preachers they humbled and discredited the local clergy."[1] It is not to be wondered at that ere long they used the power so won to inveigle the simple parishioners to entrust their souls' welfare to them

[1] Capes, *History of the English Church*, p. 12.

(the friars), even after death. The picture which Chaucer has given us in the *Canterbury Tales* certainly justifies us in thinking that the friar used the immense influence which his Order had won in the world for his own profit and interest. Hence those numerous bequests.

The Church

(1) EARLY DAYS

NOTHING remains of the original church older than the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. There is not a stone to indicate that there has been a Saxon, Norman, or Early English building. The fatal word 'restoration' is no doubt accountable for what is missing, both architecturally, and in the interior appointments; but the total disappearance of all trace of earlier buildings leaves on the mind the surmise that the original church may have been of wood.

From the Doomsday Survey of 1086 we learn that there was a church here in Saxon times. "One Church with six acres of glebe." The church was probably in existence when Theodred (some time previous to 955) left the manor by will to the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds, and with the manor no doubt would go the advowson of the living. As to the dedication (St Leonard) it has been thought that being a French saint, the church was probably rededicated at the Norman Conquest. At this early date there must have been much waste land in the parish, and the living would increase in value as this was taken into cultivation.

We owe the chancel of the existing building to the fourteenth century, the nave, porch and tower, and

also apparently the Horsecroft Chapel, to the fifteenth century. The chancel has been completely restored; but the windows have kept their fourteenth-century character. The east window, however, a marked feature of the church, has perhaps been thoroughly repaired, rather than restored. It is a fine decorated window. The Horsecroft Chapel had once a south window which, even so late as the second half of the nineteenth century, still maintained its early perpendicular character, as Gage attests. Late (nineteenth century) restoration has, however, brought it into line with the windows of the chancel, of which it is a replica. The porch, as we know from wills, was being repaired late in the fifteenth century. It was then practically rebuilt; but there must have been an earlier one. The church at this period was much smaller than at present. The north aisle was not added till 1845, nor the space round the organ, nor, for the most part, the vestry. The north wall of the church must have run very much where the arcading of the nave is to-day. In that wall there was originally a north doorway. It is described as a pointed doorway in one of the descriptions of Suffolk churches; and of course the woodwork and appointments of the church were quite different. There was an image of St Leonard, and another of Our Lady, in the chancel, before both of which lights were kept burning. There was a great crucifix over the high altar (also with a light perpetually burning) and an Easter Sepulchre. There was a chancel screen (the hook for the rood is still visible in the

roof), and very possibly an altar in the Horsecroft Chapel.

The nave, in these pre-Reformation days, would have been for the most part without seats, until the latter part of the fifteenth century, so that we can think of its open space as capable of being used, without offence, for business meetings, or musters (show of arms), or mystery plays, but not, I think, for feasts, church-ales, etc. (as at Cratfield), for which purpose there was a gild-hall in the village. The east end of the church was screened off from the nave and the various parts of the building must have been arranged much more for uses of the mass, and other sacred offices, than for preaching.

The floors would have been covered with rushes, the walls with frescoes, and the windows painted with stories of the saints. Every parish church, even the smallest, was rich at this time in mass vestments, in carving, and in woodwork, painted and gilt, for the purpose of worship.

It was during the Middle Ages that Horringer came by a second parish and a second church. In the Doomsday Survey there is one church, but in 1189 we learn that there were two separate parishes; and one hundred years later, in 1283, that there were (as the taxation of Pope Nicholas IV shows) two separate benefices. So that, in quite early days, we have to make a distinction between the churches, and the parishes, of Great Horringer and Little Horringer.

It will be convenient at this juncture to trace in outline the story of the re-union of the two parishes.

In the year 1548 the parish of Little Horringer was consolidated with Great Horringer. Previous to this, the last abbot of Bury St Edmunds, John Reeve, had vested both livings in the same rector. The last rector of Little Horringer had died in 1535, and the patron had made John Griffith, at that time rector of Great Horringer, rector of both parishes. The church of Little Horringer was allowed to go to ruin, and by 1754 its site was marked as 'Ecclesia destructa'.

(2) HENRY VIII & EDWARD VI

In the fifteenth century we get a glimpse of the church as a little gem of beautiful things. This was characteristic of any little parish church. I seem to catch a glimpse of beautiful vestments, and varied service books (was not 'a hool antyphoner' given to the church for its services by Henry Godfrey in 1529?), a chancel screen, probably rich in colour and gilt, and a great crucifix over the high altar, and near that altar an Easter Sepulchre. The walls of the church too were no doubt painted over with scenes from the lives of the saints or of our Lord and the windows, particularly that great east window, rich with painted glass.

When and how did we come to part with all these things? The answer is found by tracing the stormy course of the Reformation. This great crisis in the history of our church pursued its way in a series of phases, each of which left its mark on the churches of our land. There was the early phase of Henry VIII

and Edward VI. The first of these included the dissolution of the monasteries which affected us so intimately in Horringer by the change it brought us in the ownership of the manor. In Edward VI's time we note the destruction of images and altars. All chantries disappear and images of the saints, including our own St Leonard and the Blessed Virgin, are destroyed, and the high altar is broken up and displaced.

The next phase is the Elizabethan. After the Marian cruelties and burnings, with its reaction to the old religion, two things happen. There was a violent turn of the tide, particularly in East Anglia, towards Puritan ideals. On the other hand, after a time of great confusion, there was again a Roman reaction, corresponding to the counter-reformation on the continent. Elizabeth had to face a double danger—from the plots of Roman priests trained on the continent, and from Puritan resistance to any kind of discipline and church order. The Elizabethan age is marked by great confusion, and by critical dangers from the continent. Her rule was strong; and she imposed on bishop and priest, on Roman and Genevan alike, her ideas of what the Church of England ought to be.

After a further period of danger and confusion in James I's reign—danger from Romanist, and confusion from Puritan—there comes a time in Charles I's reign when a real effort to reconstruct both the fabric and the services of the Church was made. Something like decency and order begins to appear. But the

enemies of the Church were more than ever alive, and all is working up to a great crisis which brings us to the Commonwealth period when the clergy were ejected, the bishops driven out, the prayer-book proscribed, and the churches themselves, all Church authority being dead, were submitted to the last phase of destruction, particularly in East Anglia, where William Dowsing completed the ruin of sacred images and painted glass which Edward VI and the age of Elizabeth had begun. From the point of view of the fabric of the Church it seems pretty plain that the first fury of the Reformation in Edward VI's reign fell upon all that was connected with the mass, and on the images. We may conceive that it was at this time that the altars of our churches, the Easter Sepulchres and the images of the saints were destroyed. The image of Our Lady, and that of St Leonard in the chancel would disappear at this time. The Easter Sepulchre would also be broken up, and any chantries there may have been would have their altars and woodwork destroyed. This was the time when lists were made, by the authority of the council (under Somerset), of vestments, church silver, etc., and all these things were ordered to be sold. We see how things stood in the order given by the Bishop of London in his visitation of 1550:

We exhort curates, churchwardens and questmen here present to erect and set up the Lord's board after the form of an honest decent table decently covered, in such place of the choir or chancel as shall be thought most meet by their dis-

cretion and agreement...and to take down and abolish all other by-altars or tables.

The chantry altars were first destroyed. This was as early as 1548. Then the high altars. On November 24th, 1548, letters were issued in the king's name to every bishop ordering the removal of all remaining altars, and the replacing of them by tables. As to images, the injunctions of Edward VI, issued in 1547, were addressed to both clergy and laity, ordering, amongst other things, the destruction of images which had been abused with pilgrimages, and all shrines, pictures and monuments of superstition. These things were done, often without authority; but as early as February in 1548 an Order was issued in Council for the removal of all images whatsoever; and again in 1550 an Act of Parliament enacted that all images which remained in churches were likewise to be destroyed, except, as the Act said, "monumental images of any king, prince, nobleman, or other dead person which hath not been commonly reputed or taken for a saint".

As to frescoes, it was determined, in Edward VI's injunctions of 1547, that the churches were to be whitewashed, and the ten commandments written upon the walls. This order would of course obliterate all wall pictures of the lives of the saints, and any other sacred subject.

Of the lists made of church goods in the time of Edward VI, only one remains for Great Horringer that I know of, viz.: "Hornyngethe Magna. Chalice,

one, wayinge x oz. Great Bells, iiij". This shows that the chalice owned by the church was originally pre-Reformation. The present one is Elizabethan.

(3) ELIZABETH & JAMES I

The accession of Elizabeth marks the time when an attempt was made to evoke some semblance of order from the prevailing chaos in Church affairs. The queen ruled with a firm hand. She had good reason to. On the one hand the Romanist was a source of great danger to the country. After the massacre of St Bartholomew, the Romanists made a great effort to win this country back to the Roman obedience. Englishmen were trained for the priesthood at Douai. They came back to England prepared to do or dare anything for their persuasion. On the other hand the Puritan was scarcely less a source of political danger. Every form of authority in religion—the prayer-book and the bishops—was flouted. Some of the bishops themselves, indeed, allowed incumbents to please themselves about Church services, about decent vestments, and indeed about all custom and orderliness in religion. Parkhurst was at this time Bishop of Norwich. During his term of office great destruction was wrought in the diocese. It is known that he encouraged destruction of coloured glass wherever God was represented in it as an old man. The example of one so highly placed could not fail to be infectious. Some of the loss of glass in Horringer may be due to him.

It was at this time that the word 'recusant' gets common currency. A recusant might be either a Romanist or one of the "peevish preciser sort"—a Puritan, one who refused to attend the services of the Church. An archidiaconal inquiry was held at the beginning of the next reign in 1603. Did people, it asked, attend the Communion and the services of the Church? We have the replies from Horringer. We must not, however, be led by the figures given, into supposing that Horringer was an exceptionally pious place. Thomas Rogers was rector at the time. His answer was: "There are comnts. to the number of 140. No recusantes of Church nor communion". But this needs explanation. At this time morning service (on Sundays) was held at 8 a.m., and evening service at 2 p.m. A 12*d.* fine was imposed on anyone who did not attend these services. 'Recusancy' was expensive, particularly when it is considered that there were twenty-two holy days in Elizabethan times to which this rule applied. Elizabeth dragooned her subjects as well as her bishops. She had heard that Parkhurst's rule was very lax. The iconoclasm in this diocese had been overdone. Moreover, Parkhurst had encouraged 'prophecyings' for two years. I do not say that the bishop gave his approval to what went on, at this time, at Cockfield, barely ten miles from here, where sixty ministers out of the eastern counties met on May 6th, 1582, to organise resistance to the prayer-book. It was the design of these ministers to have a 'classis' in each cure which was to 'call' the

minister, and decide as to the omission of the ceremonies of the prayer-book. Episcopal ordination was to be undergone merely as a civil requirement. The idea was to read some extracts from the services of the prayer-book, it might be the psalms of the day and the two lessons, and then get into the pulpit, where long extempore prayers and sermons were the rule.

Something Parkhurst undoubtedly did to encourage this until at length the queen ordered the 'vain prophecyings' to be suppressed. These had encouraged nonconformity. The bishop did as he was bidden. That it was needed is shown by the returns from the Archdeaconry of Suffolk: "Many churches as yet have no surplice, but the ministers have consented to wear them as soon as they can be provided".

A lively picture of Elizabethan times is afforded by the writer William Harrison[1]. We can more or less picture the state of things at the church in Horringer by the aid of Harrison's description. A great change had come over the church since the late fifteenth century. The screen, for the most part, has gone. All the images of the saints have disappeared. The parson now takes his church services in "a little wainscot of oak" facing on to the nave. The chancel is no longer the practically exclusive scene of those services. Children are brought to church at the morning service for Holy Baptism. At the afternoon service there is a catechising. Coloured glass

[1] *Elizabethan England*, by Wm. Harrison (Camelot Series).

is not deliberately destroyed. That would be too costly. It is allowed to decay: in fact, little by little, to drop to pieces. Then it is repaired with white glass. So with the feasts of an earlier day. They had now ceased to be. Harrison says as much: "the superfluous number of idle wakes, guilds, fraternities, church-ales, help-ales and soul-ales called also dirge-ales, with the heathenish rioting at bride-ales are well diminished and laid aside". By the times of Elizabeth, church services are no longer the occasion of what Cranmer had called 'superfluous belly-cheer'. The very object for which, in the fifteenth century, men had made provision in their wills, "to say mass for my soul", had become one of the strongest motives for destruction and change. Altars have gone, and communion tables have taken their place. The images with their attendant lights have disappeared. Texts and whitewash are to be found instead.

We may well imagine something of this disorder, not to say chaos, having come to Horringer Church, seeing how near we are to Cockfield.

(4) CHARLES I & THE COMMONWEALTH

Before the Reformation reached its final phase it appears that the Church recovered something of order and beauty. This was when Laud was archbishop. A real effort was then made to restore decency to the externals of worship, and to bring the services of the Church under rightful authority. But

passions ran high, at this stage, and worse times were in store for the Church of England. To know what happened in Horringer to the church and its services is now perhaps impossible, but we may infer something from the influence of the leading squires. The chief family here, at this time, were the Blagges of Little Horringer Hall. Ambrose Blagge was married in 1608, and did not die till 1662. His son Colonel Thomas Blagge was baptised at Horringer in 1613, and when the Civil War broke out he raised a regiment for the king's service. So the family were unquestionably royalist. On the other hand the estate at Horsecroft was occupied by Gibson Lucas, and it seems pretty clear that he was a parliamentarian, at least in his earlier years. So we are left with two rival influences, politically, in the parish.

Now let us see how things were being worked out, and received by the world, in this diocese. The Bishop of Norwich at this time was Bishop Wren. In his Visitation Articles we shall most readily find illuminating material for the history of the Church in East Anglia, and we shall be able to study the course of the struggle as it was going on in this parish in the comments which these Articles met with at the time. The very idea of the uses of a church had changed in a century. In 1634 we find Bishop Juxon of London, in his Visitation Articles, asking: "Have any ancient monuments or glass windows been defaced, or anything else belonging to your church or chapel been at any time purloined?" Also he asks "whether any plays, feasts, banquets, church-ales

drinkings, musters, and showing of arms or any other profane usages hath be kept in this church, chapel or churchyard". Such questions, though not issuing from our own diocese, show clearly that the older uses of the naves of churches had changed. Naves in the late fifteenth century began to acquire seats. Their older secular uses tended to die out, as more and more they were used (and not the chancels only) for religious purposes. There was no lack of propriety, in the older view, in using naves for musters when the armour and weapons of the township were stacked in the church tower, and, before they were furnished with seats, the nave of every church would provide a large and useless space if it were not for the feasts, business meetings, musters, and possibly mystery plays which were held in them.

The visitation of our own bishop (of Norwich) is to be seen in the Tanner MS. of the Bodleian Library, but we get a vivid picture of how it was received in some quarters, in his own diocese, in Robert Reyce's letter to J. Winthorpe of Massachusetts in the year 1636.

"This summer", so it runs, "the Bishop of Norwich by his deputies made as strict a visitation in that diocese as ever seen before: all the weekly lectures putte down with sermons in the afternoon on the Lord's daye. Our Littargie now divided into two partes, the one to be readde in the readinge desk, in the other, called the second service, to be read in the chancell at the communion table placed now at the Easte Ende of the church, next the wall northe and southe....No man is to pass by this altar without crowchinge and humble

obeysance. The Bishop came to lye at a house of his wyves, but the maryners and inferior vulgar, impatient to have their mynisters and religion dysplaced, gave sundry rude affrontes to the Bishop and his followers which caused him all of a sudden, as afraid on his own condition, to leave Ipswich, and to take a house at Tostocke."

Clearly an attempt was being made to get something like discipline in the churches of East Anglia.

Details of this visitation would apply to Horringer as much as they did to Ipswich, and the tendency at this time was to check the sermons and the lectures in the interest of a restored dignity of worship. There was no little restoration in Charles I's time to the fabric of our churches, as well as renewal of order and decency in our services. In 1636 Bishop Wren wrote to the archbishop (Laud) to tell him that

lectures abound in Suffolk, not a market or a bowling green or ordinarie could stand without one. At Bury three lectures, two single lectures on Wed and Frid (in either of their churches one) and one by combination of neighbouring divines...at Haverhill a young fellow thrust up himself, sede vacante, to be lecturer....At Ixworth a lecture started up by Sir Wm. Spring...and at Wickhambrook where the lecturer is no graduate, and hath been a comon Stage player.

The following extract is from "Newes from Ipswiche". It is signed by Matthew White, but it is supposed to emanate from Robert Reyce, writing, again, to J. Winthorpe.

There being now so many suspended in our Norwich Dyocese, only for not yielding to popish innovations, that in

Sundry Churches they have neither prayers, preachinge nor fastinge, which hath brought the plague among them, and made the people at their witts end, many mynisters and people heere having left the kingdom, and thousands more being ready to depart the land there being never suche a persecution or havoc made among Gode's mynisters, synce Queen Marye's dayes as a lecherous, proude, insolente prelate hathe heere lately made against all laws of God and man to the astonishmente of the whole realm...in our Norwich Dyocese whereby the Pope Regulus has played such Rex that he hath suspended above 60 of our sincerest, paynfullest conformable mynisters both from their office and benefice, so as many of our churches (as the like was never seen since King John's dayes) are quite shutt up...hang up these Popelings....This is all the newes I shall now impart in this curranto.

Meanwhile we can see by the following notes from a book at Norwich of ecclesiastical orders, that there was good reason for the discipline which the bishop was demanding:

Particular orders &c. of Matthew, Lord Bp. 1636.

No man to have his hat on his head in time of service and Sermon in the Church. Font at Baptism to be filled with clean water and no dishes, payles, or basins to be used in it.

No wicker bottles or Taverne potts be brought unto the Communion Table. Bread to be brought in a cleane cloth or napkin.

These extracts show clearly enough how difficult it was to be a bishop in those days. We see how fierce the opposition was to all attempts at discipline, and we can trace from the ecclesiastical atmosphere

of the times the forces with which the clergy had to deal. On the whole we may assume that under Robert Goodrick's rule no great or revolutionary changes took place at the church; and I think that Ambrose Blagge, who was probably still here at this time, would have been further security for the stability of the ecclesiastical practice at Horringer.

The year 1643 was a black one for the Church of England. In January of that year an Act was passed abolishing episcopacy, and the ejectment of the clergy from their cures commenced. The clergy were driven out as 'malignants', *i.e.* king's men; also for refusing the 'solemn league and covenant'. The refusal of the clergy to sign was followed by sequestration. About 2000 clergy were so ejected. Nearly all the bishops underwent imprisonment, and almost all the clergy were reduced to extreme poverty. Christmas Day was abolished in 1644, and the use of the prayer-book was made illegal in 1645. In this year too the county of Suffolk was divided into fourteen precincts for classical presbyteries. The customary government of the Church by bishop and archdeacon had been swept away. Between the years 1643 and 1647 each parish had its own presbytery. The ministers of twelve parishes combined to form a 'classis'. The choice of ministers was now by the people. A committee for demolishing of monuments of superstition or idolatry was now appointed by the House of Commons, and whatever had escaped destruction at an earlier date was now broken up. So early as January 1641, commissioners were sent into

the several counties "to demolish and remove out of churches and chapels all images, altars or tables turned altar-wise, crucifixes, superstitious pictures and other monuments and relics of idolatry". These orders would not be unnecessary in view of the revival of the services, and appointments of the Church, when Charles I was king.

In Horringer, sequestration found Robert Goodrick rector. He was turned out with his wife and children. He continued, however, to reside at Horringer, where he was buried shortly after the Restoration on September 24th, 1660.

During the Commonwealth, then, our village church was under presbyterian rule. The prayer-book was an illegal book; and the presbyterian system, even though it may have made little impression on the general mind, was nominally, at least, established in law.

(5) THE SEVENTEENTH TO NINETEENTH CENTURIES

In the last two hundred years the church at Horringer has undergone a good many restorations. For the most part these restorations have done more to alter the aspect of the interior of the church than its architectural features. From *Architectural Notes on the Churches of Suffolk* (1855) I ascertain that while the lower part of the tower was of the fifteenth century the upper part (in 1703) was rebuilt with brick. It has the names of the churchwardens of the time

inscribed on one of its windows, viz. William Lucas and Thomas Covel who resided respectively at Horsecroft, and at what is now Horringer House. A clean sweep of all existing woodwork was effected in 1818 by Arthur Brooke (of Brooke House). From the Davy MS. in the British Museum we learn what was done in that year: "The exterior has been stuccoed and adorned with handsome gothic architecture and a slated roof". I am proud to think that I was responsible for removing all of this stucco and much of the "handsome gothic architecture", which was, however, extremely artificial, from the tower and the battlements, in 1913. The woodwork within was of "finest carved and varnished wainscot" (some of it remains on the door). The pulpit "with the altar, its cushions and appendages, is dressed in crimson cloth and rich fringes". Then there follows the damning statement: "In short nothing remains of the former edifice but the plain masonry of the walls".

Arthur Brooke placed a "railing round the communion table", and after his effort was completed had the church opened, with an appropriate sermon by the Rev. H. Hasted to a numerous congregation, October 16th, 1818. A white marble inscription in the tower describes his work.

In 1845 a north aisle was added to the church. This greatly affected the building, as it involved the removal of the north wall of the nave. "A north door stopped up", notes the Davy MS. of this wall. Its removal caused also the shifting of the monument to Dame Elizabeth Gipps, and also that of Sir Richard

Gipps which lay then on the floor at his wife's feet. The present arcading took the place of this outside wall.

In 1867 for the second time Lord Arthur Hervey undertook a restoration, this time, as it appears, of the chancel. The fourteenth-century windows and the piscina and priest's seat were restored, the altar-rails (if they were his work) supplanted those of Arthur Brooke, and the chancel was re-seated. The arches on the north were constructed, and other changes were made. It was not till 1883, when the Rev. Arthur Heigham was rector, that the gallery at the west end, the three-decker pulpit and the high pews were removed.

So in about sixty years Arthur Brooke's work was largely superseded. It remained for the present rector to bring back the exterior of the church, as far as possible, to its fifteenth-century character. The tower and the battlements were then freed from stucco, and rebuilt with Ketton stone, and the porch was restored, its perpendicular window being once more exposed to view.

I have hitherto omitted all mention of the Horsecroft Chapel. I have found it difficult to avoid the conclusion that this chapel was once a chantry, but all my efforts to establish this have failed. The chapel has been associated with the Lucases of Horsecroft, but that family gained possession of their property too late (it was 1567) to establish a chantry, and former owners scarcely seem to have been wealthy enough for such a foundation. The chapel is certainly pre-Reformation in date, for the south window

(as is seen in Gage) was originally Early Perpendicular in style, and of three lights, not as at present of two lights. The bases of the chapel archway also appear to be ancient, though the present capitals are a comparatively recent addition. The fact that Mr Turner in the eighteenth century, and after him Mr Wigson, laid stress on the words "the sole property", makes me suspect that the chapel at one time held seats for any of the residents of the hamlet of Horsecroft. It is a further puzzle that in the Davy MS., in, it seems, the year 1724, the chapel is described as "an Ile (aisle) leased".

(6) THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

It is of interest to try and recapture the appearance of those who assembled, Sunday by Sunday, in the village church, in early Victorian days.

Coming up the street, over the village green, I see them all, the keepers, and the labourers; the latter clad in smocks, the former in velvet frocks. The men wear tall hats, very rough, some white, some black. The boys too are dressed in smocks. The velvet frocks are black or brown. The men wear buskins. The smocks are prettily embroidered in blue or red on the breast, and on the short sleeves. None of them wear collars, or cloth, but neckerchiefs. They are proud of their gay smocks and tall hats.

Inside the church there, on the right, is Mr Wigson's pew. The seats are elevated a little above the level of the church pews, and they face to the north.

Mr Wigson is churchwarden, an office the most important among the old-time offices of the vestry. The venerable form of the Rev. Henry Hasted, rector here from 1814 to 1852, is to be seen in the pulpit. In the gangway during service time a man stands with a long wand of office. He is one of two beadles whose names in the earlier nineteenth century were Tom Orange and William Lilly. The other was in the gallery where the choir sang. At sermon-time these two changed places. Their business was to restrain the young, and to keep the somnolent awake. They were called stick-men. They wear duffel coats with capes and their coats are bound with yellow braid. The pews are high, the pulpit is a three-decker, and there is (at this time) a gallery. The charity of those days is seen in the presence, in fixed seats, right and left, of four old men and four old women. The old men wear duffel coats, the old women red cloaks. These garments were gifts. About twelve of the older scholars of the school, too, attract the eye with their dresses (also a gift of charity) of blue or brown (in alternate years), with white tippets, crimped at the neck, white aprons, and straw bonnets. The armlets are short and sleeves of white calico are worn tied beneath the armlets. The children themselves plaited the straw of the bonnets and, so woven, it was made into straw hats by an Ickworth woman, Mrs Race of Mortarboys.

Nearly the whole of the above article owes its origin to a traditional and not to a written source. It shows, I think, how much of village life is preserved by conversations with the aged people of the place.

The Gilds

One of the most interesting buildings in Great Horringer which has fortunately survived the changes of the centuries is undoubtedly the old Gild-hall. This building takes us back to a date before the Reformation, and as one of its great chimneys is built of rubble and not of brick, I think we may assume that its date is of the fourteenth rather than of the fifteenth century. In early days this building looked straight out on to the green. The four cottages called 'flint cottages', were probably not erected until the nineteenth century. The space in front of the building is now called 'Workus yard', because the gild-hall was used as a work-house in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. But at first there was no yard. The gild-hall looked straight out on to the green, and on to the church, with which it was closely associated. In the fifteenth century the only building adjacent to it would have been the block of high pitched and thatched cottages, now the post office. In a fifteenth-century will, these houses are, I feel sure, referred to. The testator leaves "my tenement by the gild-hall" and that, in fact, is the position of the buildings to-day.

People so often seem to think that a gild must have something to do with trade or manufacture. The impression arises from the famous gilds of the city of London. Trade gilds were indeed common

THE GILD HALL
(LATER, THE TOWN HOUSE)

in the Middle Ages, but in country places like Great Horringer it is quite common to find that there were gilds not for the purpose of a craft but with purely social and religious aims. Gasquet[1] has pointed out that the love of one's neighbour enters into the objects of a gild quite as much as the love of God. In fact the one is a part and complement of the other. The gild then was a medieval association in which the objects were quite as much mutual assistance as acts of piety. The aid of the poor, of the helpless, the sick; of strangers, pilgrims, and prisoners; the burial of the dead; even the keeping of schools and schoolmasters, were held to be 'exercises of religion'. At the same time, members of the gild were, through it, associated with their parish church, and with its services, and also with their parish priest far more intimately. The remembrance of the soul at and after death occupied a place in the medieval mind far more real and living than, it would appear, it does to-day; and this would be expressed by the yearly attendance of the gild, as a corporate act, at church, for the yearly commemorations and masses, as well as at many minor services (trentals, etc.), in which remembrance was made of the dead. Add to this the provision of lights, so often a subject of bequest in medieval wills. It is through this provision of lights that frequently we come to know what was in the church in the fifteenth century, and where it was. Piety prescribed for a member of a gild that he should do something to maintain the fabric and services of his parish church.

[1] *Medieval Parish Life*, p. 253.

Thus Harry Godfrey in 1529 leaves to the church of 'Moche Hornygesheath' "a cow to find a light before the Image of our lady in the quere" (choir) and Walter Noble in 1470 leaves 2*s.* for painting the image of St Leonard; while William Welham so late as 1534 makes the following bequest: "Item, I give a cow in like manner to the intent to fynd ye light over the rowell [a circlet of lights] in the said churche to burne on Sundayes and other hoolye dayes in service time as yt hath bene of oulde usage used, perpetuall to endure".

Innumerable are the instances in which a member of a gild would show his practical piety. William Edward in 1485 leaves no less than £10, a large sum at present values, "To a new Rodeloft in the s[d] Cherche".

The screen at that time must have been in a bad state of repair. And we should never have known that there was an Easter Sepulchre in the church if Simon Custe in 1464 had not left 3*s.* 4*d.* "to the lights burning about our Lord's Sepulchre".

It was in fulfilment of the duty of piety, by a gildman, that William Welham in 1534 gave a cope value £5 to the church of Great Horringer "which cope I give and bequeath to the said Church...there to remayne to the house of God as longe as it will endure". As the Reformation was so near it is to be feared that it did not have to endure very long, and it is to the same generous donor that we are indebted for the information conveyed in the following

bequest: "To the Churchwardens of the s^d^ Church for the time being a cow to the intent that they with the profits and letage yearly coming of the same cow shall find oyle to burne in the lampe before the crucifixe in the chauncell of the s^d^ Churche all service tyme perpetuall to enduer". Finally, I find a bequest for the repair of the porch no less than three times in these wills.

It is quite clear from the foregoing that there was no neglect of the duties of religion in this place, and that piety abounded in these generous benefactions. I have pointed out already that commemoration of the departed was one of these expressions of piety, just as intercession to the saints was another, and the celebration of the mass a third.

There are, however, two bequests in these wills which call for some little explanation and help us to see the gild in action. One is from Walter Noble (1470), who leaves "to the Rector of the s^d^ church all the mass money belonging to me of the Holy Trinity Gild in the s^d^ town", and the other is from the will of Adam Rodyng (1474), "of Mekyll Hornyngesherth". He leaves "to the reparcyon of the Gylde Hall 20*d.*" (Noble, by the way, leaves 12*d.* "to the repair of the vessels belonging to the hall of the said Gilds"), and then adds: "I will that the mespens [mass pence] of both gilds of the Trinity of St John Baptist in Hornyngesherth been so partyd equally halfe sorte to be sunge for in the parish Cherche of Hornyngesherthe by the parson and the Residue to the Fryers of Babwell".

It is of these mass pence that I want to give some account.

"Members of gilds", says my friend Mr V. B. Redstone, "had power to decide how the mass pence, collected at the time of their burial by fellow members, should be used for their advantage, by selecting the priest who should celebrate, and also by choosing the character of the services or offices to be performed by him. It seems probable too that members made provision for such services by depositing money or kind (cows) in the gild's stock to be used for obits, and trentals, &c. Such deposits would be mass pence, the property of the deceased to be bequeathed to the use he willed in his testament."

From the above we have already learnt several important facts. First, the names of the gilds here, viz. St John the Baptist and the Holy Trinity; and secondly that there were gild-properties, *i.e.* vessels belonging to the gild; and thirdly that there was a gild-hall (as we know) which required repairs. Fortunately there was in our neighbourhood a gild of which we have ample information, viz. that of Bardwell. We may I think rightly infer that conditions in Great Horringer were much the same as there. From Bardwell accordingly one can get a picture of the gild life very similar to what must have been the case here.

First, then, every gild had its own *officers*, some of whom were elected annually. These would be an alderman, who at Bardwell was never the vicar; a chaplain; a cook, who had charge of the dishes, plates, etc.; a minstrel, who was paid 1*s.* 4*d.* a year;

and a guardian of the lights. Two of these, it seems, were annually elected, and 6*s*. 8*d*., it appears, was allowed annually for wax, and two persons were also elected as "guardians of the light of the sepulchre".

Then the gild would have its own *possessions*, in kind rather than in money. These were *kine*, let out, and so bringing in a little yearly income; a *flock of sheep* also let out and bringing in an income of some 10*s*.

Then there was the *gild-hall* at which all business would be transacted, and used also as a banqueting hall; and plates and platters, and cooking utensils. These are listed up at Bardwell.

In addition to the above there were three *banners*, used in processions at the funerals of members, etc.; and some large *torches*, *i.e.* great wax candles to be lit up round the hearse at a funeral. As to *membership* in the gild, the two gilds of Great Horringer would, I should imagine, absorb practically the whole population. At Bardwell there were 134 members, of whom about half were women, and in which number were included 33 married couples. Allowing for children this would include most of the inhabitants.

The facts I have now adduced show pretty clearly that the gild gave scope to the piety of the people. We must not lose sight of its other side, *i.e.* its social and charitable character. As Gasquet says: "Gilds were the benefit societies, and the provident associations of the Middle Ages. They undertook towards their members the duties now frequently

performed by burial clubs, by hospitals, by almshouses, and by guardians of the poor". The gild "joined all classes together in the care of the needy and for objects of common welfare, it did not neglect the forms and practice of religion, justice and morality, which was indeed the mainspring of their life and action".

Each gild had its little fund derived from the annual subscription of members and from the 'stock' of cows and sheep fed on the common pasture and from this fund they helped a member when in straits and gave alms to their poor.

On the social side they made much of the funerals of departed brethren, and they possessed a stock of articles, pots and pans, mugs and dishes, and a mazer with a silver rim, in which they drank to one another's health and prosperity.

They were wont to come together, once a year on their feast day, to a special mass, when their rector would preach them a sermon.

All this medieval life went on until the Reformation when the gilds were suppressed, first in Henry VIII's reign on a large scale (in 1545) and secondly in Edward VI's reign, when chantries were suppressed (in 1547) and when, by the "brief certificatt" of 1548, some 300 gilds, value from 2*d.* to £5 or £6 for chantries, up to £300 or £400 for a college of priests, had their goods listed up and forfeited to the State.

The Town-house

As the above article attempts to tell something of the story of the gilds and of the gild-hall, this is the right place to continue the story of the hall, and its uses, to the present day. In the centuries that followed the dissolution of the gilds, the hall came to be used as a village work-house, and was known as the Town-house. In later days two members of the vestry were overseers. In Elizabethan times I think there were four. It was the duty of every township to have the care of its own poor. The Elizabethan poor-law divided these into (1) the impotent poor, (2) the able-bodied, under voluntary or involuntary indigence. "Convenient houses of dwelling", and the putting out of children to be apprentices, were provided for the first. For the second materials of work were to be provided but 'vagabonds' were consigned to a house of correction. A law of settlement was necessary if relief was to be a parochial burden. The law of 1605 and 1662 defined this. A man's place of settlement was to be where his residence for forty days could be proved.

I cannot ascertain when first the gild-hall began to be used as a town-house, *i.e.* work-house, but in 1722 churchwardens and overseers were empowered to provide houses for the maintenance of the poor, to contract for the employment of the inmates, and

to apply the surplus of their earnings to the reduction of the rates.

By Gilbert's Act (1782) the management of the poor was vested in a visitor and guardians, and poor relief was taken out of the hands of overseers, who only collect and account for the rates. Though this act was only optional it served as a stage of transition to the next century, when unions were legally established.

As to the occupations in which the inmates of the town-house were engaged, we know that there was a certain amount of land at the back of the hall which was cultivated by them; and also there is a tradition that the building was used for wool-combing. There is a little house adjacent to the hall which is said to have been occupied by a master.

From contemporary literature village work-houses do not seem to have been very cheerful places nor the aged peasants' masters very merciful.

In a description of a poor old labourer George Crabbe writes:

> No more, O death, thy victim starts to hear
> Churchwarden stern or kingly overseer
> No more the farmer claims his humble bow
> Thou art his Lord, the best of tyrants thou.

And writing of a town-house he says:

> There is yon House that holds the Parish poor
> Whose walls of mud scarce bear the broken door
> There, where the putrid vapours flagging play
> And the dull wheel hums doleful through the day,
> Parents who know no children's love live there
> There children dwell who know no parent's care.

Miss Mitford, the author of *Our Village* (the last volume of which appeared in 1832), writes thus:

> The path that I am treading leads to a less lively spot, to that large, heavy building on one side of the common, whose solid wings, jutting out far beyond the main body, occupy three sides of a square, and give a cold shadowy look to the court.... That is the parish work-house. All about it is solid, substantial, useful, but so dreary! so cold! so dark! There are children in the court, and yet all is silent. I always hurry past the place as if it were a prison. Restraint, sickness, age, extreme poverty, misery, which I have no power to remove or alleviate—these are the ideas, the feelings which the sight of those walls excites.

Truly we have made a little social progress since those days.

It remains now to tell the story how the town-house was merged into the present-day Union and the vestry into the modern Board of Guardians. In the year 1827 a select vestry was appointed "for the concerns of the poor". At this meeting the Marquis of Bristol was present. Why he was we learn a few years afterwards. On June 14th, 1836, we are told that the parish quota towards the cost of the new Union was £140. 19*s*. 5*d*. and it was then resolved that "parish property to that amount be sold".

In August of the same year the vestry resolved that the poor-house with land behind it (3 roods) be offered to the Marquis of Bristol for £290; and at an adjourned meeting this offer was accepted. Finally on September 15th the vestry (so its resolu-

tion ran) "consents to the guardians of the poor of the said Union selling the premises". This was done under the provision of a special Act of Parliament of William IV, to facilitate the conveyance of such work-houses. Such were the steps by which the gild-hall passed from the hands of the township into private possession.

Wool and Wool-combing

I CANNOT find that Horringer has at any time been a centre of the cloth-making industry. This village fell outside the area in which the industry of cloth-making was carried on, on capitalist lines, by the Springs of Lavenham. A large number of villages were engaged in that industry, which extended as far as King's Lynn and included the Bradfields some nine miles from here.

This village, however, has had a great deal to do with wool, and in particular with the process called wool-combing. In the old days spinning was an industry in which any woman might be engaged in any place and at any time. Why, otherwise, the word 'spinster'? But that Horringer was closely associated with wool is shown in the fact that before the Enclosure Act two lamb fairs were held here, no doubt on the Great Green, on St John Baptist's day, and on St Bartholomew's. When the Great Green came to an end by the Enclosure Act of 1815, the fair left the village, or at least was temporarily transferred to Mill Field in Westley Lane. Up to then the lamb fairs were held here annually. What the connection was, if any, between these fairs and the great Stourbridge Fair I am unable to say; but Defoe tells us that two commodities were, above all others, brought in enormous bulk to Stourbridge,

viz. wool and hops. So no doubt our local fair had at least some indirect connection with the more famous one.

As to wool-combing I know that it was a local industry in Horringer. That this was so is shown by the Parish Registers for the years 1695–1704, when the occupation of every father bringing a child to baptism had, by law, to be indicated. During this period there were eleven entries of wool-comber, representing six persons, after allowing for repetitions. There are also entries in the registers, gradually dying out, in the early nineteenth century. I know too by tradition of no less than three distinct houses each of which has at some time been a 'wool-comb'. The process of wool-combing appears to have been something like the following: Two combs were employed, one as a pad comb fixed on a post at a convenient height by an iron rod fixed *into* the post; the other the combing comb. After each comb had been charged with raw wool they were placed in the stove or comb pot to be heated (by charcoal). The worker placed one comb upon the pad, and, with the other comb in hand, commenced the lashing or combing operation. The process, I presume, straightened out the hairs in a sheep's fleece, divided the long hair from the short, and prepared the wool for the process of spinning.

Wool-combing was in fact an important process in the preparation of the wool, from the sheep's back to the hands of the spinner.

This industry was widely carried on in the county

of Suffolk, how widely we learn from Shoberl (*History of Suffolk*) who writes:

> The principal fabric of the county was till lately [*i.e.* the early nineteenth century] the spinning and combing of wool, which extended throughout the greater part of Suffolk. In the year 1784 the woollen fabric was estimated by Mr Oakes of Bury to employ 37,600 men, women, and children whose earnings amounted upon an average to £150,000 per annum.

This is an instance of one of the many industries which were lost to this and other counties by being transferred to Yorkshire. So, in the registers of the early nineteenth century, we find the name of wool-combers less and less frequently, until at last it stops altogether.

The wool-combers of the seventeenth century had a great grievance against the officials who farmed the hearth tax. These officials compelled the wool-combers (who used earthen pots of coals) to pay for those pots, as if they were hearths. No wonder that indignant protests arose from the combers against the unfair tax.

Briefs

If you went to church in the days of Charles II you would perhaps have heard the parson read out an appeal for some urgent cause of charity.

This appeal emanated from the king as head of the Church, and it was, by his authority, conveyed through the bishops, that a collection was authorised throughout all the churches of England.

Such appeals were called 'briefs'. An account of these briefs for Horringer has been preserved for the years 1661 to 1699. They have been printed by the Rev. S. H. A. Hervey in the Suffolk Green Book for Horringer. These appeals were for different objects. A fire accounts for many of them. The loss by fire might be a private and personal one. Sometimes it was incurred at sea. Or the appeal might be for the repair of a harbour. Often the collection is "for ye infected by ye plague". That occurred in 1665 and 1666, and commemorated the plague of London.

But there is one appeal which recurs from the year 1668 to 1693. It is for the redemption of captives out of Turkish slavery, for which purpose the large sum of £3. 14*s*. 10*d*. was collected in the year 1671. It is of this I propose to write a few words.

I think that this collection must have greatly appealed to those who heard it. It would certainly have deeply moved the congregation of any seafaring place. We must shift our minds from the present day

and imagine the high seas, in the Mediterranean especially, as they were in the seventeenth century.

The Mediterranean was then infested with pirates. No ship, not being a man-of-war, was safe in it. Before the battle of Lepanto in 1571, the Turks had been the dominant power on the high seas. After their defeat they became the scourge of Europe, but as pirates and buccaneers. No longer able to oppose the European powers by a strong navy, they carried on their hostilities as the enemies of commerce and transport by stealth. No Christian ship was safe. From the ambassador to the common sailor all were alike lawful prey to the Barbary pirate. The crews of such ships as they succeeded in taking were carried off to Algiers. These oriental freebooters had strongly entrenched themselves there. All prisoners so taken, especially the high-born, were held to ransom. There was no freedom for them until the price demanded was forthcoming.

In the early seventeenth century, the Barbary pirates passed the Straits of Gibraltar, and bore boldly out into the Atlantic. Between 1609 and 1616 the Algerine rovers captured the large number of 466 British vessels. They lay out to sea, off such places as Plymouth, Exeter, or Barnstaple, and waited for merchant ships to leave the port. They even landed by night at Penzance and carried off sixty men, women and children. In 1640 a petition was sent to the king (Charles I) begging him to deal with the evil. But in the fourth decade of the seventeenth century I learn that there were no less

than 3000 husbands and brothers and fathers, with relatives in England, in Algerine prisons, and what imprisonment in Algiers meant can only be gathered from those who have told the pitiful story of it. "It was no wonder", says the author of *Barbary Rovers*[1], "that the wives and daughters thronged the approaches to the House of Commons and besieged the members with their prayers and sobs."

So much in explanation of the briefs of that day. But we may note, in passing, that, at an earlier date, this evil would have been dealt with through one of the great medieval fraternities. In the will of John Brysete, dated 1476, the testator, among other bequests, says: "I leave to the brothers of the Order of the Holy Trinity and the Redemption of Captives who are imprisoned for the faith of Jesus Christ among the unbelievers, 3*s.* 4*d.*" I should not have referred to this save for the fact that the Trinitarian Order was still in active existence in Spain in the seventeenth century. The legacy I have referred to was left before the Reformation, *i.e.* before the suppression of the Trinitarian Order. Curiously enough this legacy, like the collection made in the seventeenth century, was bequeathed to ransom Christian people from Moslem prisons; but at the earlier date the Mahommedans were, from a military point of view, in the ascendant. It was quite recently (1453) that they had taken Constantinople itself, the capital of the Greek Empire, and led by Sultan Mahomed II, surnamed the Conqueror, they were

[1] By J. Finnemore.

pressing dangerously into Europe. Mahomed has been described as the greatest conqueror among the Ottoman Sultans, and the awe inspired by his name must have led some courageous Englishmen to go and try to stem his advance, and in the campaign that followed they must, it seems, have been taken prisoners. Hence the bequest.

The Church Silver

THE church silver is for the most part connected with the Restoration.

The chalice belongs to Elizabethan times. There was a chalice here before the Reformation, but it was lost to the parish in the disturbances of the era of Edward VI.

The flagon is exceptionally handsome. It is large, and of a type not unknown to secular uses. I have seen one very similar in the recent exhibition of the City Companies' silver, but in this case there was no lid. The lid seems to have been added to make it suitable for sacramental use. From *Church Plate in Suffolk*, a pamphlet published by the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology, and from inscriptions on the silver itself, I ascertain who were the donors of the silver of this church, the chalice excepted. Most of it came to us about the same date, *i.e.* in the latter part of the seventeenth century, and it is of interest to find that two pieces of it were the gift of members of a family which is well known to us, and also was illustrious in that century, viz. the Blagges of Little Horringer Hall. Members of that family appear to have continued to reside in this parish or neighbourhood some time after they had ceased to occupy Little Horringer Hall. Thus the flagon has round the inside of its foot the following inscription: "Donum Judethe Uxoris Tho. Coluel geñ et unius Filiarum Ambrosij Blagge

THE CHURCH FLAGON

Armg: Ecclesiae de Horningsherth 18 Octob 1664 die Nuptiale sua".

Judith was a daughter of Ambrose Blagge, and therefore a sister of Colonel Thomas Blagge, who was one of the first who took up arms in the cause of Charles I. She was baptised in this church in 1620. In marrying Thomas Covel she espoused a near neighbour, as Covel's house was apparently what is now known as Horringer House. Thomas, it appears, was steward to John, Earl of Bristol, and it was he who executed the "survey of Ickworth" showing the extent of the eighteen farms into which the park (at that time disparked) was divided. The names of Covel and Blagge, it may be mentioned, appear on a monument on the wall of the Horsecroft Chapel. Judith died in 1707 at the ripe age of 87. She did not forget her church after the troubles of the Commonwealth were over. The Blagges were a loyal family, true both to king and church; and it was to a sister, Margaret Blagge, that we are indebted for the paten. The inscription on this piece of silver is "Donum Margarette Blagg unius filiarum Ambrosii Blagg Arm: defunct Ecclesiae de Horringer ubi ipā nata fuit". Margaret was baptised in 1635 and died unmarried in 1720.

The almsdish has the same marks on it as the paten. There is a court hand 'e' for 1699–1700. The inscription on it is "Donum Johis Walker in Artibus Magist Ecclesiae de Horringer ubi ipē sepultus fuit 17 Sept 1677". This almsdish raises the same difficulty as does the flagon. The flagon has a black

letter capital 'S' for 1675–6. But the inscription tells us that it was given to the church on Judith Blagge's wedding day, viz. October 18th, 1664. Similarly the inscription on the almsdish tells us that it was given to the church by John Walker, who, as it says, died in 1677, but the letter on it gives the year 1699–1700. Possibly the silver was sent to London to be stamped with the letter after it had been presented to the church.

There is little to be said about the chalice except that it is a neat cup-shaped piece of silver with a prettily flowered border and that it has on it a black letter 'K' for 1567–8 and the other customary marks. Also, the chalice makes good one of the cruel losses to this church occasioned by the confiscations of Edward VI's reign.

The Township

I DO not know of any greater contrast than is presented between a modern village and the township of the England of an earlier date. The organisation of the present-day village is merged now into that of larger units. The self-contained township has ceased to exist.

In an older time the township was the typical centre of local life. It was the unit of government and administration. It kept its own roads, for the most part, so far as they were kept at all, in repair. It was responsible for the maintenance of its own poor, and its own work-house. It elected its own officers of law and order, in the form of constables. If there were bridges to maintain, it did it through its own bridge reeves, if fens, through its own fen reeves. When our country was at war it was the township, through its vestry, that chose from among its own members who should serve in the militia.

The vestry therefore was a far more important body than it is now. It represented all the main affairs of the township—roads, poor-law, police, home defence, and local order. The author of *Chronicles of Theberton* says with justice:

> Parishes were then indeed small republics, not as now mere geographical expressions. They made and levied their own rates and expended their own money; they maintained the one church in which all the people worshipped; they relieved their own poor and provided their own poor house, repaired

their own roads, managed their own common lands. The 'occupiers' served each parish office in turn, of Churchwardens, place of most dignity, of overseer—"the father-in-law of the parish"—of surveyor, of constable, and in Theberton of fen-reeve. The duties of these offices were more important than is often recognised, and were wholly unpaid, but they brought humble men into relations with social superiors, the bishop, archdeacon, parson and justices, trained them in independence of thought and action, and initiated them into at least the elements of municipal law and public business. The system had of course many drawbacks, which writers have held up to ridicule; but I venture to think that in these bureaucratic days of Boards and paid clerks and paid inspectors we do not hear enough of its advantages.

This system of the self-governing township lasted at least all through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and well on into the earlier years of the nineteenth century, and that parish can account itself happy which has preserved its churchwardens' and overseers' accounts from an earlier day.

It is unfortunate for Horringer that no churchwardens' books are preserved (one has disappeared in the writer's time) and only one overseers' book, dating from 1814, is in existence.

I have already spoken[1] at some little length about the overseers and the village work-house. These officers were elected annually at the vestry meeting. In the overseers' accounts commencing 1814 we have the names of some of those who occupied this office. Of these I shall have more to say later on.

[1] See article on the Town-house.

Meanwhile the vestry as we see it in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was very largely the product of the Elizabethan poor-law. The older office of churchwarden provided a continuous thread of parish government. Queen Elizabeth meant her new poor-law to have been purely voluntary. "Our loving subjects" were to have provided whatever was needed for the sick, poor, and infirm. But it came to a rate eventually. The overseers, then, were officials appointed for this purpose, and with them the churchwardens were associated *ex-officio*. Of the four main offices on the vestry—overseers, churchwardens, constable and surveyor—the first two always appear to be most important at the period I am referring to.

The overseer's duties were most multifarious. He was appointed annually at the spring vestry meeting, and, as already said, his office was unpaid; but he must certainly have worked hard at his complex task. Not only did he have to seek out the sick and aged and indigent poor of the parish, but he had to see that young people were duly apprenticed to a trade, and that they did not become a burden to the community. He had also to guard his parish from becoming chargeable for persons whose 'settlement' was elsewhere, and go if necessary to some expense in conveying them to the justices. He had authority to provide almost anything for the sick and aged, to buy for instance, and hold in reserve, coals for the poor, to lend money on the security of the debtor's chattels, to buy a flock bed for a widow, to give relief in the form of clothes, shoes, food, wood, rent, medical

attendance, funeral expenses, in fact almost any imaginable thing. Young and idle people were to be taken before the justices and we see the overseers' accounts for the expense of the journey to Ipswich. Constantly indentures for apprentices were drawn up between the young person (apprentice), the churchwarden or overseer, and the new master. The overseer was to keep a tight hand on these apprentices. "At dice or cards or Tables, nor at any other unlawfull games he shall not play. Taverns nor alehouses of custome he shall not haunt nor frequent."[1] The overseers had to help travellers on their way (when armed with a pass) and, at East Bergholt (where the vestry books are exceptionally well preserved), as many as ten sailors had at one time to be assisted on their journey. Things were more or less simplified in 1722 when workhouses (the town-house) were provided by law in each township, and a governor or governess was appointed. The house for the latter is still to be seen near our own town-house.

These town-houses do not seem to have been very successful. The idea of government seems to have taken precedence of the idea of humanity in the affairs of the vestry. Contemporary literature (though of a late date) appears to bear this out. Miss Mitford's picture of an overseer seems to have been taken from the life.

Farmer Thorpe is a stout square sturdy personage of fifty or thereabout, with a hard weather-beaten countenance of

[1] *East Bergholt*, by T. F. Patterson.

that peculiar vermilion, all over alike, into which the action of the sun and wind sometimes tans a fair complexion, sharp shrewd features, and a keen grey eye. He looks completely like a man who will neither cheat nor be cheated, and such is his character—an upright downright English yeoman, just always and kind in a rough way, but given to fits of temper, and filled with an abhorrence of pilfering, and idleness, and trickery of all sorts, that makes him strict as a master and somewhat stern at workhouse and vestry.

When the destinies of the aged poor were made over to such men we get those painful pictures of helpless and indigent folk which Crabbe so masterfully sketched. For instance:

> Why then this proud reluctance to be fed
> To join your poor and eat the parish bread
> And yet I linger, loth with him to feed
> Who gains his plenty by the sons of need,
> He who by contract all your paupers took
> And gauges stomacks with an anxious look.
> On some old master I could well depend
> See him with joy & thank him as a friend;
> But ill on him who doles the days supply
> And counts our chances who at night may die.

Contracting out of the village poor was no doubt effected somewhat late on in the history of the poor law. Perhaps some of the kindliness of the eighteenth century was swamped by the hard life that followed on the Napoleonic war, but it is sad that Shoberl should have been able to write at the very end of the term of existence of the village work-house: "The

interior of these houses (Unions) must occasion a most agreeable surprise to all those who have not before seen poverty but in its miserable cottage, or more miserable workhouse". No doubt these officers, the overseers, divided their work between them, and so were able to compass the heavy task of relief; but it still required no little industry to collect the rate, dispense charitable assistance, attend to the innumerable details of the relief of the poor, the training of apprentices, the assistance of travellers, and the removal of troublesome cases to their place of settlement.

The constable, like the overseer, was appointed once a year at the vestry meeting, and approved by the justices. He often acted, I think, as the executive of the overseers. It was his office to do the work which the overseer had decided to be necessary. It was he that saw that young women were conveyed by pillion or side-saddle to Ipswich, and it was he that took them before the justices, and got official permission to deliver them to their proper place of settlement, or have them trained in the 'mystery' of household affairs. It was the constable's task to raise hue and cry from parish to parish, to keep watch and ward, and to protect the community from felons. He had to look after the butts, to see that the stocks were in good order[1], and to watch over the pound, so that it was ever ready to receive stray cattle. It was to the constable that travellers with an official pass applied for assistance on their way, and

[1] Jacob, *The Compleat Court-Keeper.*

it was they who took the names of recruits for the militia, duly balloted for, in the Napoleonic war, saw personally that they joined their units, and helped to provide for the expenses (duly presented at the vestry) of the General Defence Act at the time when Napoleon was most perilous to our land. Carrying his staff of office with the royal arms in gilt upon it, he asserted the authority of his township.

In the overseers' book, of late date, which we possess at Horringer, there are lists of nominees (those liable to service) of overseers and of constables. The churchwardens also are entered, but I do not think any mention is made of the surveyors. Yet the office of surveyors was important and necessary and was one of those borne by the vestry.

It is odd to look back on the days when the vestry managed its own roads. For a week or two in the spring the law required a certain amount of labour and transport to be supplied by each township, for the repair of the roads. And what roads! Before enclosure there was, anyhow, plenty of room. The roads, including the king's highway, as it was called in legal documents, were wide. For a reason. So little metal was put upon them that the track was soon broken up. It became a quagmire. So drivers tried the side; and then the middle. Acts of Parliament were passed forbidding narrow tyres. These cut up the roads. Broad and ever broader tyres were required. The idea never seems to have occurred to them that the road must be adapted to the vehicle and not the vehicle to the road. Mr Albert Pell somewhere

describes his memories of a great roller that was laid up in the winter near the church. In the spring out it came. Gangs of labourers were engaged in levelling the huge ruts. Then they carted any rough stuff to hand, scattered it on the road, and rolled it in with the town roller. The fortnight was regarded generally as a sort of holiday. The surveyor himself, generally a farmer, was not too pressing on his brother farmers; and so once a year the roads, almost if not quite impassable in the winter, were flattened out for the summer months. It was not until those two great road-constructors, Macadam and Telford, came along in the 'twenties and 'thirties of the nineteenth century that the roads became passable. The surveyor, as was the case with the other office-holders on the vestry, was unpaid. I don't quite know when his duties finally ended, not I think until the 'sixties. The District Council has now taken over his functions. That was in 1894.

It cannot be said that the township surveyor was a success. I have been told of a case where the neighbouring parishes came to loggerheads about a certain spot where three roads met. None of the three contiguous parishes would accept responsibility for repairs to the road at the point of junction. Things got worse and worse, till the place was impassable. The exact spot, to avoid responsibility, they called 'nowhere'; but at last the disputants had to meet, and I presume the place at length became 'somewhere' as the road, by sheer force of necessity, was repaired.

Looking over the names signed at the vestry meet-

ings in the earlier part of the overseers' account book of 1814 one notes that nearly all of them were born in the eighteenth century, and died in the nineteenth. The group that met in vestry were drawn from very various classes of the community. The persons elected to the office of constable were in no way on an equal footing, socially, with the churchwardens or even with the overseers.

William Edwards, who was constable in 1818, was, as his headstone tells us, "wheelwright of this parish for 33 years". George Farrants, constable in 1825, was a blacksmith. William Smith, who was constable in 1818, became parish clerk in the same year. Of the overseers, one or two leave their honoured names in the village to-day, as Michael Sturgeon and John Sturgeon; or there are inscribed initials, as W.G. for William Gardiner, constable in 1832 (a son of Thomas Gardiner), on farm buildings in Westley Lane; or I.P. for John Pearson, who was constable in 1828, over a cottage doorway in the village. James Byford was constable as late as 1851. His great-grandson is still with us.

Then we may climb to higher ranges, to W. B. Wigson, churchwarden, whose elegant signature is often to be seen, and whose descendants still own Horsecroft; or Woodward Bidwell, a prosperous farmer of Great Horringer Hall, overseer in 1821; or Mr Charles Hill Hall, of Horringer House, who was overseer in 1818.

These names seem to bring us very near to the times and help us to realise the ties of common service which held together the community in these earlier days.

The Peace of 1814

In the year 1814 Napoleon's tremendous career appeared to have come absolutely to an end. On the last day of 1813 the allied forces crossed the Rhine, and a third of France passed without opposition into their hands.

"For two months", says Greene, "Napoleon maintained a wonderful struggle with a handful of new conscripts against the allies' overwhelming numbers, but the war was even then at an end....The struggle had ended at the close of March with the surrender of Paris, and the submission of the capital was at once followed by the abdication of the Emperor."

Throughout England the coming of peace at the end of this titanic struggle was marked, as well it might be, by the most spontaneous and wholehearted rejoicings. The day on which these celebrations took place must have marked the time when the terrible trials of the war, and the immense strain of it, were at an end.

Here in Suffolk the same drastic measures had been put in force as in the rest of England—the militia bills for home defence, and the enclosure acts for the securing of our country's food-supply against Napoleon's policy (as adopted by the Germans in the late war) of sinking British ships at sight. If it was true that many of these ships were not food ships, but carriers of England's foreign trade and commerce, the

effect on the nation was no less deadly. The sinking of the ships struck at the very existence of our national life. Consequently the number of enclosure bills which were passed from 1809 to 1814 inclusive amounted to no less than 704. The nation's food supply clearly occupied a first place in the schemes of the Government. Further, both in Lord Euston's directions about the destruction of means of transport, and in the militia bills of 1803 and 1804, it is clear that the authorities were fully awake to the perils of invasion. A letter from Lord Euston to Sir Charles Davers is a vivid reminder of what happened here in Suffolk during the late war. He recommends "that in the case of invasion all horses and draft cattle that cannot be driven out of the reach of the enemy be shot, that all the axle trees or wheels of all carriages likely to fall into the enemy's hands be broken, the fullest assurance being given of complete indemnification".

From a contemporary history[1] we ascertain that in 1803 "a new species of militia, to be denominated the 'army of reserve' consisting of 50,000 men for England and 10,000 for Ireland was to be raised by ballot, and confined to the defence of the United Kingdom, but allowed to volunteer into the regular army; all persons were liable to serve, from the age of 18 years to that of 45". In 1804, "the regular force", says the same authority, "proposed for the public service amounted to 167,000 men, the embodied militia of Great Britain and Ireland were 110,000, and the Volunteer corps upward of 400,000.

[1] Hughes, *History of England.*

According to Lord Castlereagh the effective force of this country in rank and file...amounted to 615,000 men, while the commissioned and non-commissioned officers augmented it to 700,000".

All these preparations are made fully intelligible by the events that led up to Trafalgar in 1805. The actual presence of Bonaparte at Boulogne with a fleet of flat-bottomed boats; his saying "Let us be masters of the channel for six hours and we are masters of the world"; and the dramatic manœuvring of the French navy for an opening in the channel, Nelson having command of the British fleet, accounts fully for the amazing activity shown in the provision, from every township, of drafts of militia and of volunteers.

We can well understand then how deep the national relief was when these perils and sorrows came to an end. Those who live in Horringer are indebted to one who resided at the Hopleys for the account of the celebration of the Peace. Peter Gedge was then editor of the *Bury Post*, and he wrote of what happened as one who was himself a resident in this place. The celebration took place on August 17th. I give the larger part of his account as it stands in the files of the *Bury Post* in that month of 1814:

The Presidents and Vice Presidents met on the Church Green, all decorated with blue and white cockades. Preceded by a band of music, and flags flying, they walked in procession to the great green where 9 tables were placed in the form of a star, at which nearly 400 persons of both sexes, including the children of the charity school, took their seats.

The fare was the usual thing on such occasions, roast beef and plum pudding.

The musicians were placed in an elevated orchestra, tastefully decorated, with the standard of England flying over them, from whence they played, as a signal of setting to, "O the roast beef of old England". After dinner they smoked their pipes and took snuff.

The health of the King was drank with three times three, succeeded by the favourite national air of "God save the King", sung by the children of the school, and between every loyal and patriotic toast (greeted with loud cheers) some popular air was played, to the great pleasure of the numerous company, who promenaded round the tables during the repast; before the close of which a large party of ladies and gentlemen, visitors on this occasion, partook of a picnic cold collation in a spacious cart-lodge, fitted up al fresco with flowers and evergreens, in a style that excited general admiration: and where the Revd. Mr. Hasted, the worthy Rector, presided, as he had before done at a table on the green, and whose health, with the prosperity of the village of Horringer was drank in both places with the greatest applause, as was also that of the Earl and Countess of Bristol, and the noble house of Hervey.

"Sports of jumping in sacks, a jingling match, a barrow race, a pig hunt, and several races both male and female for various prizes" were then indulged in, "nor was the sprightly dance forgotten". The festivities were kept up "till night closed the scene". On the next afternoon the women and children had a "tea-party (filling four of the tables previously used) with a sufficient supply of West India cream [he

means rum] and bread and butter, at which equal mirth and hilarity prevailed". "Sports of jingling and racing were again repeated with no less pleasure than the previous day."

This lively account tells its own tale. We may note here how recently the national anthem had come into use, and I may add the following short notes from P. H. Ditchfield's *Old English Sports* explanatory of 'Jingling'.

> A large circle was enclosed with ropes, in which the players took their place. All were blindfolded with the exception of one, the jingler, who carried a bell in each hand which he was obliged to keep ringing. The object was to elude the pursuit of the blindfolded, and he won the prize if he was still free when the game ceased.

It is interesting to know that tradition has still kept alive the memory of a man who fought at Waterloo (one year later than the above record). In the last house of what is now known as Six-Row in Sharpe's Lane, there lived a man named John Thurlow. He was an artilleryman. He wore a dark blue coat with brass epaulettes, and a medal with three bars. This tradition was handed on to me in 1918. I doubt whether any one now (1929) would remember it.

Enclosure

I AM inclined to think that of all the things which have gone to change the aspect of this village, and to alter its ways of life, socially and economically, the most important in the course of history was 'enclosure'. The year 1815, the year of Waterloo, saw the common lands, plough lands and grazing, enclosed in Horringer. Up to that year the same methods of agriculture, and the same breeds of animals, very largely carried on from far-back feudal times.

Let us think for a moment what was the state of things in Horringer before the date of enclosure; then what was the effect of enclosure on the way the land was tilled, and on the houses in which people lived; and then what was its effect on roads and driftways, in fact on the whole methods of communication in those days.

I think we shall find that the village took the form with which we are familiar at this time. To understand the change we must go back to what was left by an earlier age.

Time was when a large portion of the lands in every village was unenclosed. That is to say it was not hedged in. Part at least of the agriculture of a village was a co-operative affair. Much of the land was, as it were, one farm, jointly cultivated by the regular peasant-residents. It was a farm, not indeed

as we know it, contiguous, and divided field from field by hedges, but scattered throughout the area of the parish and unenclosed. The plough lands were in strips, of which you owned one or more, changing your strip every year. The grass lands were largely in greens, large or small, which again you held in common (hence 'commons') turning in your animals on a definite principle decided by custom or local use. On the green, in common with your neighbour-cultivators, you put your sheep or cows, or it may be geese, and you shared your grazing rights with them. The buildings in which you lived were either roomy farmhouses, or such as would be suitable to small peasant-proprietors. In each case there would be outbuildings for the cattle, and the type of house would be one suitable for a farmer or small owner, equipped with barns or sheds. You might also have a little land of your own, a field or two; or an orchard, if your holding were not indeed larger.

All these, plough lands and greens, were unenclosed. There were no hedges. There was nothing to prevent untended animals from straying away from them. Hence the pound and its keeper the pinder. Such briefly was the condition of things before enclosure.

Then came enclosure. Separate Acts of Parliament were obtained to enclose the open fields and greens and waste lands of each parish. This happened all over England, not at one time but during the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Between 1710 and 1760, 334,974 acres were en-

closed. Between 1760 and 1843 the number rose to 7,000,000 acres. In the year 1808 the number of Enclosure Acts was 92. In the period dating from 1809 to 1814 there were no less than 704 such Acts[1]. I must now speak briefly first as to what was done under the Acts, and secondly why it was done, and thirdly its effects upon the national method of tillage, and then on those peasant-proprietors who, as we have seen, make up so large a proportion of dwellers in every village.

What change we have here! Those lands which had been cultivated in common, both plough lands and grazing lands, were enclosed. Hedges appeared everywhere, where from time immemorial there had been none. The cultivated land, and no less the grazing lands and the greens, large and small, were divided up and hedged off into fields. Not only so; the public roads and the driftways which hitherto had been of varied breadths, and lavish in their margins, were curtailed. Many of the roads were reduced to a standard width. Many of the pretty driftways, accommodation ways for carts, were closed. I speak of what I know of enclosure in Horringer. A driftway ran from what is known as the Low-way to the other end of Sharpe's Lane (about a mile). It was enclosed. The part of Westley Lane near the village shows clearly, by the ditch which runs in the grass field ten yards from the present hedge, the width of the old road. And the changes which enclosure brought with it affected the very

[1] Hughes, *History of England.*

buildings of the village. Houses which once were farms, or small dairy homesteads, or peasant-proprietors' dwellings, have become in course of time cottages. The barns can often be seen nearby the house. What was once a farmhouse has been divided into three cottages. There is a barn at the back. In one of the rooms of these cottages there is a large open fireplace. Over it are the racks which held the pole which raised or lowered the spit.

College House was once College Farm. The barn is still there. The Hopleys, now a gentleman's estate, still incorporates the farm buildings of an earlier day. The barn is there too. Throughout the village it is not fanciful to trace the presence of the smallholder and peasant-proprietor. Tradition has preserved the memory of the farm, even if the buildings have been much altered.

By enclosure again the greens were broken up and hedged in. At the far end of the present village there was a green of sixty acres. In the fifteenth century there were two lamb fairs held there, one on St John the Baptist's day, the other on St Bartholomew's day. In the eighteenth century the fair day, on June 24th, was a great occasion in the village. Enclosure brought it to an end. On such an occasion the farms round the green would be crowded with animals. Thirty to forty horses were stabled at 2*d*. each at the farm now called Shrublands, then 'Wymarks'. As we learn from the *Bury Post* an enterprising publican made provision for public needs. On August 24th, 1793, "John Haycroft of the Six Bells (says the

Bury Post), advertises that he has engaged the great house on the green for Wednesday, September 24th, lamb fair day, when the best of everything will be provided". We may be sure that there would not be a fair without popular entertainment. While it went on shepherds wore white smocks, and special beer licenses were issued to houses which, from the bush they displayed, were called 'bough houses'.

But the green was soon to cease to be. It was a great advantage to the farmer whose house faced on to it, and to smallholders, to be able to pasture their sheep or cows on the common; but enclosure spared neither small nor great greens, and we owe it to a Suffolk poet, Nathaniel Bloomfield, that verses reflecting the sentiments of the times have preserved for us the feelings of the villagers when the tiny green, only I believe half an acre, was enclosed at Honington.

> The green though but daisies its boast
> Was free as the flower to the bee:
> In all seasons the green we loved most
> Because on the green we were free.
>
> Twas the prospect that first met my eyes
> And memory still blesses the scene,
> For early my heart learnt to prize
> The freedom of Honington Green.
>
> No peasant had pined at his lot
> Though new fences the lone heath enclose;
> For alas the blest days are forgot
> When poor men had their sheep and their cows.

Still had labour been blest with content
Still competence happy had been
Nor Indigence uttered a plaint
Had Avarice spared but the green.

It will be noticed that the Enclosure Acts were passed not only during the war, but long before it, and sometimes after it. Our forefathers then had a motive for their policy on agricultural matters quite other than the food supply, urgent as this was, of the nation in war time. To put it quite briefly these motives were twofold. First, the improvement in husbandry which had been going on all through the eighteenth century; and second, the improvement in the breed of animals. The old system of rotation of crops had become effete, and the pooling of stock on the village greens prevented the improvement of that stock. The yield per acre on the new system was immensely larger than that of the common-field system, and the weight of wool derived from sheep of the new breeds was immensely heavier. Enclosure was carried out because it vastly improved the methods of tillage and of breeding.

We shall not unjustly sum up the matter if we say that while there was a great improvement in methods of agriculture, and in the yield, the Enclosure Acts did not avoid inflicting great hardship on the peasant-proprietors of the village. Here in Horringer, as everywhere else, the men lost their cows and their sheep, and from being independent or semi-independent men, they became day labourers, working for a wage. But the subject is large and

intricate and does not admit of fuller discussion here.

A further and most noticeable effect of enclosure and of large farms and estates is seen to-day, in the village, in the form of the beautiful timber which now adorns it. It was during or soon after the Napoleonic war that so many of the trees, which have now grown to such stately proportions, were planted. One side of the village street is backed by the covert which there flanks Ickworth Park. These oaks were planted in 1800 to 1812. Again the estate, now called Horringer Manor (its old name was Brooke House, from the owner), came into existence also during the war. Arthur Brooke planted the beeches, which now surround the estate, sometime before 1814. A smaller estate, Shrublands, in Sharpe's Lane, derives its hundred-year-old fir trees from the date of the enclosure of the green; and I have already pointed out that the Hopleys, a converted farmhouse, together with the trees which belt it in, though dating from about 1840, owes its origin as an estate to a period not so very much later.

One effect of enclosure, then, was immensely to enhance the beauty of the village by enriching it with stately and umbrageous foliage. I think of this place as somewhat lean and untidy before all these amenities, the result largely of enclosure, came to grace the scene.

A Few Notes about Houses

COLLEGE HOUSE was once College Farm. The farm buildings are still to be seen. Before the house was used as a farm it was simply called the College. It is so named in the rate book of the seventeenth century at which time the house appears to have had ten hearths. In 1693 Dr Lucas pays 3*s.* 1½*d.* in church rates for 'the Colledge'. In 1699 Thomas Wiseman pays 12*s.* 6*d.* for "Capt. Lucas Colledge late Dr Lucas". Dr Lucas was Gibson Lucas of Horsecroft, upon whom a degree in theology was conferred in 1664[1]. He seems to have given up Horsecroft to his son William during his lifetime and lived himself at 'the college'. Captain Lucas was his son. As to the name of the house I have not been able to ascertain more about it than that the college referred to was a college of secular priests. Though rebuilt, the house was therefore of considerable antiquity.

Of THE HOPLEYS I have already written. Risking some repetition it may be said that the core of the present house is a farmhouse. The change was made by John Fowler Dove, who at one time was a London printer and publisher. He succeeded Mrs Gedge, the widow of Peter Gedge (who was formerly editor of the *Bury Post*), in about the year 1833. The house, it seems, was then decorated in 'Horace Walpole'

[1] *Horringer Parish Registers*, by S.H.A.H.

gothic, the belt of trees encircling the estate planted, and the fields laid down to grass, and the whole turned into a small park.

It will be remembered that we owe the account of the festivities in Horringer, on the occasion of the celebration of the peace of 1814, to Peter Gedge and the *Bury Post*.

THE GILD-HALL. This is a long thatched building standing in what is known as the School-yard. It consists to-day of the infants' school and three cottages. It is probably the oldest building in Horringer. It was first the gild-hall of the village, and continued to be so till the destruction of the gilds in the times of Henry VIII. At some later date, probably in 1722, it became the town-house or village work-house. There are signs of an archway (for carts) still visible in the structure. This would have given access to the fields beyond, which were at the disposal of the work-house. There is one ancient chimney which is made not of brick but rubble. This, together with the interior roof which is supported by unwrought oak beams, argues a great age, probably the fourteenth century. In earlier days the gild-hall was free of all other buildings and faced straight on the church green and the church itself, with which it was so closely associated. Evidence is not wanting that the upstair rooms have been put in at a later date, and that the building once extended from floor to roof.

The house now called HORRINGER MANOR was known thirty years ago as Brooke House. This name is derived from its builder, Arthur Brooke, who

seems to have moved into it about 1814. It was Arthur Brooke who munificently restored the church in 1819, as the inscription in the tower testifies.

Previous to the construction of this abode there was a malt-house on the site of the new building. Also the road from the Low-way ('Leonard Street' as it was called) led straight in front of the house to the Horringer-Bury road. The noise of the traffic annoyed its owner and he built the present road, going by the rectory, instead. Arthur Brooke also planted, in the early part of the nineteenth century, the hundred-year-old beeches with which the property is now encircled. The house has been rebuilt and the estate greatly improved by the present owner.

THE POST OFFICE. In the block of buildings of which one-half is the post office, there are two dwelling-houses. I feel pretty sure that this block is referred to in a will of the early sixteenth century (Harry Godfrey, of moche Hornyngesheath, 1529) where the testator "leaves his tenement lying by the gild hall of the town of Hornyngesheath" to his son John. One of these cottages has signs of a buttery. It was an inn, the 'King William the Fourth'. There was also an extensive building just east of the cottages, used, at one time, as a 'woolcomb'.

THE HOUSE NEXT THE OLD RECTORY. This was a pretty sixteenth-century house. It is now three cottages, but in older days one house. Its ceiling is finely timbered, and there are good carved oak fireplaces. It seems probable that it belongs to the first quarter of the sixteenth century. In the 1693 Rate

EARLY 16TH CENTURY HOUSE

EARLY 16TH CENTURY HOUSE
(INTERIOR)

Book it is owned by Dr Lucas, but occupied (as one house) by Mrs Mary Nelson. In 1699 it has changed hands and is held by "John Wiseman for Capt. Lucas next the parsonage". There is a tradition that one of these cottages was used as a 'wool comb'. The windows have all been enlarged.

THE OLD RECTORY. This house is now used as a village institute. Some of the rooms have ornamental beams with chamfered ends. These beams indicate larger rooms than are to be seen at present. There are also three great chimneys. The house has been given sash windows, but they were once smaller, and there is an overhang beneath the plaster which can be seen to-day at one end of the house, and which hints at an earlier date. Here the rectors lived (and, much later, the curates). Two of the rectors (viz. William Bedell, and Arthur Charles Hervey) attained to the episcopate. This house must have been built after the Reformation. Its date seems to have been about the middle of the sixteenth century. The house and its antecedents must have witnessed all those incidents and changing fortunes of which the story is told in the article 'The Church'.

THE FARM UP THE STREET. The farm half-way up the village (it has no name that I know of) was occupied in the early nineteenth century by a widow named Ann Double. The signature of her husband, William, is to be seen in the overseers' book of 1814. It is rather roughly written. He was constable in 1826 and signs as 'inhabitant' in 1827. The farm was used at one time as an inn and its name was 'The

Half Moon'. Ann, I fear, was ruined by the hard times which followed on the Napoleonic war. She had mortgaged her property and being burdened by debts she had to sell, and the purchaser was the Lord Bristol of the time.

The story of the house which was once at HORSECROFT is closely connected with the Lucas family. Horsecroft has always stood somewhat apart from the rest of the parish. It is known to us as the hamlet of Horsecroft, a name which it has borne so far back as the reign of Henry II. The land was not, of old, concentrated in one pair of hands, and it did not become an estate until Thomas Lucas the grandson and heir of Thomas Lucas of Little Saxham bought up most of the lands, and in particular acquired in 1567 the estate of Jaspar Warren together with a new house which had been lately erected by John Holte of Bury St Edmunds.

In 1706, William Lucas, the descendant of Thomas Lucas, parted with the estate to William Turner. It eventually came to Elizabeth, the wife of William Wigson, and so to William Bacon Wigson who was churchwarden at Horringer in 1818. William Bacon Wigson died in 1872, aged 85 years, but I do not find in Gage the year in which the old house was pulled down. Of the Horsecroft Chapel, which is now a faculty pew of the Wigsons, Gage says: "The south chapel is now converted into a pew for the family of William Bacon Wigson, Esq. of Horsecroft". The site of the old house appears to be now an orchard, north-east of the present house, says

Gage. Up to the house a fine avenue of trees at one time led, reaching as far as the wicket-gate to Horringer. There are still some eight of these trees standing. The site of the old house seems to tell of the far-off days of the Lucases, when for the first time for over 200 years Horringer acquired a resident gentleman.

THE MANOR HOUSES. Incomparably the most interesting houses in a parish like Horringer are the manor houses. To these I must refer at rather greater length. The interest, in such a case, arises, as it seems to me, from a different cause. GREAT HORRINGER HALL was the scene of the meeting of the manor court for many centuries before the Reformation. It was the *dominium*—the principal manor of the parish—where all the business of the manor court was transacted. Little Horringer, though it ceased to have a separate church at the Reformation, acquired a special interest from the residents at the Manor House, an interest which adds no little romance to the history of this parish.

I will take Great Horringer Hall first. The existing building does not appear to go further back into the past than the sixteenth century. An ancient brick chimney, to which at one time a large open fireplace was attached, has been preserved and is incorporated into the existing building. From the days when the cellarer of the monastery used to come out and preside at the manor court to the days when (at the dissolution) the abbot of Bury St Edmunds ceased to be the lord of the manor, there were stages of

transition. The downward steps in the fortunes of the monastery are, as I have said in the history of the manor, marked by the appearance first of John Boldero in 1501 as a tenant of the Abbey Farm; and then of John Pryck who continued to be a tenant up till the time of the dissolution. This coming of tenant farmers to what had always been a farm 'in hand' of the monastery, cultivated by them directly and under a bailiff, was somewhat of a portent.

In 1501, apparently for the first time, the manor of Great Horringer was *leased* to John Boldero of Fornham St Martin.

"The Abbeys", says Mr Capes[1], "had lived on the produce of their lands, but now labour became scarce and dear, and the profit of their half cultivated manors disappeared.... Another system soon began to be adopted. Instead of the old capitalised cultivation, with a bailiff on each large estate, tenant farming before long was introduced such as had been only exceptional before where estates were too far away for easy access to them....The religious houses like the rest, dealt in this way with their estates, keeping however often in their own hands a home farm to supply the community with their produce."

The manor, then, was leased to Boldero for fourteen years at a rent payable in kind to the cellarist. He pays in wheat, barley and peas as well as faggots, brushwood and straw.

After Boldero comes Pryck. We find his name in the subsidy of Henry VIII (1524), the largest payer in

[1] *History of the English Church.*

Great Horringer being "John Prik in goodes £24, £1. 4*s*. 0*d*." We come upon Pryck's name again in the list of lands made out for the abbey at the dissolution (1539): "£11 from the ferm of the site of the manor with the demesne lands leased to Pryck", etc. After deductions for expenses the balance of the value of these lands was paid to Richard Southwell, knt.

After the dissolution the manor house passed rapidly from hand to hand until it came (in 1583) into the hands of Robert Jermyn of Rushbrooke; from him early in the eighteenth century to the Davers and from that family, by marriage, to the Herveys. But since the dissolution of the monasteries it does not appear to have been other than a farmhouse.

The interest of LITTLE HORRINGER HALL arises chiefly, but not exclusively, from its occupants after the dissolution.

In 1518 the abbey appears to have acquired considerable lands in the parish, and the last abbot of Bury St Edmunds, John Reeve, or Melford, rebuilt the hall, in the principal chamber of which were to be noted the carved and painted arms of the abbot and of King Edward the Confessor. The earlier associations of the manor house, then, are with the stately abbey, not far off, and with its abbot. When Thomas Cromwell's visitors came to Bury St Edmunds they had no great complaint to make against the abbot beyond that "he laye moche foorth in his Granges, that he delited moche in playing at dice and cardes, and

therein spent moche money, and in buylding for his pleasure...". He seems in fact to have been a harmless and kindly country gentleman. The poor man had but a short time in which to enjoy his recently erected buildings as the abbey was dissolved, and Reeve ceased to be abbot in 1539.

After the dissolution the manor house (and the manor) came into secular hands. I am not concerned here with its early (and very temporary) owners, but before long (in 1562) it was bought by Sir Ambrose Jermyn of Rushbrooke. He had it from Thomas Lucas of Horsecroft, who was grandson of the Solicitor-General, and had married Mary, daughter of Sir Thomas Jermyn, and had sold Little Saxham to Sir John Crofts of Westow.

With Lucases and Jermyns we, of Horringer, are on familiar ground, and it is not long before we find the family of Blagge on the scene. Henry Blagge (as I learn from the Green Book) was here before 1574, and he was the father of Ambrose Blagge with whose various children the associations of the manor house of Little Horringer are so interestingly enriched. To some of the members of this interesting family I must now allude in rather fuller detail.

Colonel Thomas Blagge was the eldest surviving son of Ambrose Blagge. When the Civil War broke out in 1642 he at once raised a regiment (in Suffolk) for the King's service. For a time he held the important office of governor of Wallingford. After the death of Charles the First in 1649 he became attached to the young Prince Charles. After the

COLONEL BLAGGE

battle of Worcester in 1651 he fled with the prince and about 60 others. When they had covered about 25 miles they reached John Penderel's house at Boscobel. Here they separated; not however until Charles had entrusted his watch to Lord Wilmot, and his diamond badge as a knight of the Order of the Garter to Colonel Blagge. After climbing up trees and many narrow escapes Charles managed to take ship at Shoreham and get out of the country.

Meanwhile Colonel Blagge who had fled in another direction had contrived, for safety's sake, to hide the badge, but it was not long before he was taken prisoner and carried to the Tower of London. Whilst there somebody succeeded in finding the badge and bringing it to him. Subsequently he was able to escape from the Tower and to restore the badge to his Prince. It should be added that this particular badge probably had an additional sacredness from having been the one worn by Charles' father at his execution. Colonel Blagge died within six months of the Restoration on November 14th, 1660. He left behind him a widow and four young daughters. It is to be noticed that Charles II, in the hour of his triumph, did not forget his old friends. Two of Colonel Blagge's daughters, Mary and Margaret, became Maids of Honour to the Duchess of York; and after her death in 1671 Margaret became Maid of Honour to Queen Catherine.

Margaret[1] was born in 1652 after her father had

[1] In the Guide to Liverpool Cathedral there is the following

left Horringer for court and camp. Alone among her family her name is not entered in the baptismal registers of Horringer church. As however her family, and possibly Margaret herself still had some connection with the county a few details about her are not inappropriate.

Margaret was the youngest of the family and when the Restoration took place she was eight years old. Soon afterwards she was taken to France, where she strongly resisted all efforts to make her a Roman Catholic. She was confirmed in England at a very early age (when barely eleven), by the Bishop of Ely. In 1665 she was taken into Suffolk to escape the plague.

short notice of Margaret Blagge. She appears in a window there as one of the good women of all ages.

MARGARET GODOLPHIN AND ALL WHO HAVE KEPT THEMSELVES UNSPOTTED IN A CORRUPT WORLD

Margaret Blagge, whose brief life has been immortalised by Evelyn the diarist, was maid of honour at the Court of Charles II. She entered at twelve years of age the household of the Duchess of York. In a post which the prevailing customs of the Court rendered painfully difficult, as well as in that of maid of honour to Queen Catherine of Braganza, she conducted herself with rare modesty and decorum. Pious and devoutly minded, a woman of prayer, cheerful, kindly, discreet and wise, she added to the simplicity, gentleness, and fervour of youth those colder virtues which are more often the fruit of age and experience. Evelyn testifies to her unceasing benevolence, her diligence in visiting the poor, and her self-denying charity. The permission to retire from Court was to her a release from an oppressive thraldom, for which she gave thanks to God. After some years she married in 1675 Sidney, afterwards Earl of Godolphin, known later as Queen Anne's famous minister, and with him the last three years of her life were happily spent.

As already stated she became Maid of Honour to the Duchess of York at 14. When that Princess died she was appointed Maid of Honour to the Queen. Her friendship with John Evelyn the Diarist seems to have begun as early as the year 1669 when he mentions "that excellent creature Mistress Blagge". She was then 17 and he a man of 50. Such an intimate (and absolutely innocent) friendship I consider to be quite intelligible, first when we think of the religious interests of the age, and second when we consider the well-known character both of Margaret and of John Evelyn. Not long afterwards Margaret left the court and took up her residence with Lady Berkeley in Berkeley Square. Later on she accompanied the Berkeley family to Paris, where Lord Berkeley had been appointed ambassador. Subsequently she married Mr Sidney Godolphin (afterwards Earl of Godolphin and minister to Queen Anne). On September 3rd, 1678, Evelyn notes (in his diary), "She was brought to bed of a sonn, who was baptiz'd in the chamber, by the name of Francis, the susceptors being Sir William Godolphin (head of the family), Mr John Hervey Treassurer to the Queene, and Mrs Boscawen, sister to Sir William, and the father"; but on September 8th she was "attacq'd with the new fever, then reigning this excessive hot autumn" and on the 9th of the same month she died. At her own request she was buried in her husband's family burial-place, in Cornwall. "The corpse", we learn from Evelyn, "was ordered to be taken out of the hearse every night [on the

way] and decently placed in the house, with tapers about it....This funeral cost not much less than £1000". I do not think that anything which has been written by Evelyn in his posthumously published book, *The Life of Mrs Godolphin*, is the least exaggerated. From her own diary we get a glimpse of the rule of life to which she firmly held during her period of office at a Court which, however charming, was notoriously immoral. She was witty, a clever mimic, pretty and entertaining, but always kind, unselfish, and charitable. That she was open-handed to the poor is to be seen in the gift of £70 which Evelyn one day received anonymously and which subsequently proved to be from Mrs Godolphin who, he says, "had frequently given me large sums to bestow on charities". It was the combination of charm and wit with innocence and kindness of heart that gave her such an attraction at Court. "She would sing", says Evelyn, "and play and act and recite and discourse prettily and innocently....The greatest Duchesses and Ladies sought her friendship and assistance upon any occasion of solemn Pomp, Masque, Ball, or extraordinary appearance." But I must refer my readers to Evelyn's book, or, for a shorter but well-written life, to the excellent account of her to be found in Margaret Tabor's *The Four Margarets*.

Two other members of the family must here be briefly referred to. The Blagges, loyal as they were to Church and State, did not forget the needs of their parish church when the Restoration took place. Both

MARGARET GODOLPHIN

of Colonel Blagge's sisters, Margaret and Judith, gave pieces of silver to the church, Margaret the paten, and Judith the flagon, an illustration of which appears in this book. Judith married Thomas Covel of Great Horringer in 1664 and lived to the ripe age of 87 years. Her sister died unmarried.

After the Blagges came the Gipps. The Blagges seem to have ceased to reside at Little Horringer Hall after 1635 when the Blagge baptisms cease, and before 1645 when the Gipps baptisms begin. There is a monument to Sir Richard Gipps in the church (at Horringer), and another to his wife, Dame Elizabeth Gipps. Sir Richard came by his title when he went over one day in 1676 on a visit to Lord Crofts at Crofts House, met the king there, and returned Sir Richard Gipps. He did not enjoy his honours long, as he died aged 36 in 1681. Elizabeth outlived him by over thirty years, dying in 1715. The next owner of the manor house seems to have been Thomas Davers, and it was from him, soon after 1751, that George, Earl of Bristol, bought Little Horringer. He pulled down the hall, and with the materials built what is now the agent's house.

The site of the old manor house is within the moat. It is now an orchard; but though not a stone of the old building remains, the spot is still haunted by the associations of many generations and all their variegated life.

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